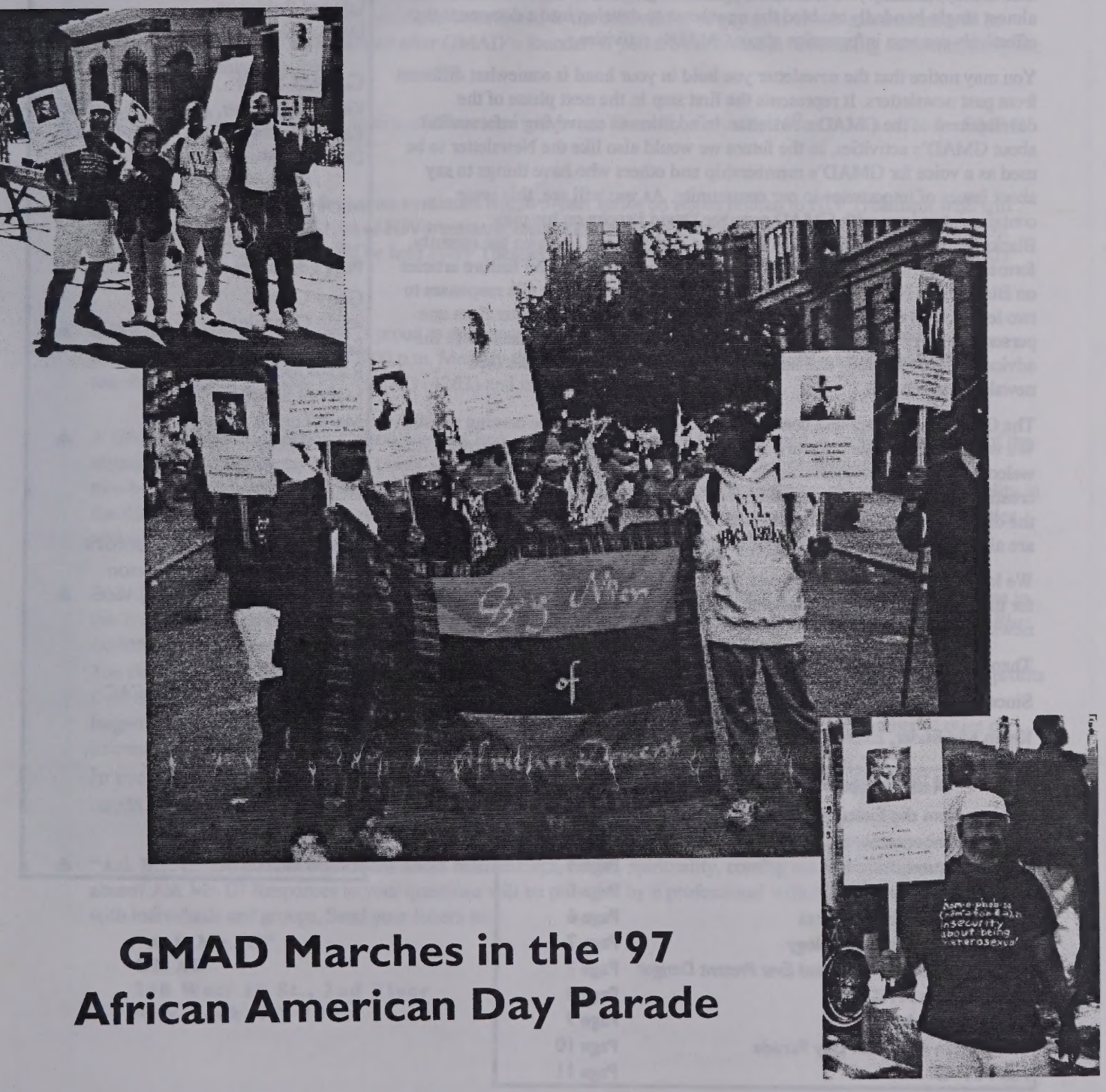
GMAD Newsletter

Gay Men of African Descent

SEPTEMBER 1998 VOLUME 12, NUMBER 2



GMAD Marches in the '97 African American Day Parade

GAY MEN OF AFRICAN DESCENT IS AN ORGANIZATION COMMITTED TO EMPOWERING GAY MEN OF AFRICAN DESCENT THROUGH EDUCATION, SOCIAL SUPPORT, POLITICAL ADVOCACY AND HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROMOTION.

Dear GMAD Members and Friends:

As you may know, with the publication of the August 1998 newsletter, Byron C. Mayes ended his tenure as editor of the newsletter. During his two-year tenure, the newsletter developed considerably in terms of page length. I want to take this opportunity to thank Byron for his diligent work each month which almost single-handedly enabled the newsletter to develop into a document that effectively conveys information about GMAD's activities.

You may notice that the newsletter you hold in your hand is somewhat different from past newsletters. It represents the first step in the next phase of the development of the GMAD newsletter. In addition to conveying information about GMAD's activities, in the future we would also like the Newsletter to be used as a voice for GMAD's membership and others who have things to say about issues of importance to our community. As you will see, this issue contains interviews with GMAD member David Brooks on his play Blackpoemology, and with Colin Robinson and Tamara Jones on the recently formed Caribbean Pride organization. In addition, you will find feature articles on Black Pride NYC '98, and Cruising for Sex as well as Mr. G's responses to two letters. The expanded scope of the GMAD newsletter is greater than one person can carry out, and the several members worked on this issue (with the advice of Byron Mayes), and have agreed to work on future issues (see newsletter masthead).

The GMAD newsletter will continue to grow and evolve in the coming months. We will continue to seek feature articles, letters, photographs, and artwork and welcome your ideas and articles. In addition, we will continue to seek short creative writing pieces for the Backspace section. Eventually we plan to expand the distribution of GMAD beyond mailings (dropoffs at strategic locations) and are also exploring the possibility of offering advertising.

We look forward to your comments, contributions (by the 15th of the month, for the following month's newsletter) and assistance in helping the GMAD newsletter to grow.

Thanks again Byron for all your hard working in helping us to move forward.

Sincerely,

Kevin McGruder, Executive Director

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Derwin Keith Vega

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GMAD Announcements

▲ At the August 14th **GMAD Annual Meeting**, David Jones and Ivery Thomas were elected to the Board of Directors of GMAD. There was a tie between David Brooks and Marques McClary for the third open Board seat. A runoff will be administered by mail.

▲ GMAD will hold its 1998 **Charles Angel Awards** on the evening of Saturday, December 5th (location will be announced soon). Six individuals who have contributed to the community of gay men of African descent will be presented with Angel Awards named after GMAD's founder. If you are interested in nominating someone, complete the enclosed nomination form.

▲ The next meeting of **GMAD's Board of Directors** will be on Thursday, Saturday 10th at 6:30 p.m. at the GMAD office. The meeting is open to all.

▲ GMAD's **Education Tuesday** series continues with a 5-part series on issues related to HIV Treatment with will include the history and evolution of HIV treatment, discussion of the different categories of medicines, treatment adherence, etc. The sessions will be held every Tuesday in September from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the GMAD office.

▲ **GMAD's Project Millennium** is proud to announce the Information and Referral Helpline. The Helpline is available from 12:00 noon until 8:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Saturday. The telephone number is 1-888-325-GMAD (4263) and is toll free.

▲ A **GMAD Public Education Committee** has been recently formed to address the need to broaden the scope of the organizations' work to the general public in addition to providing a mechanism for further involvement of its membership in a number of areas. Among the ideas planned include a series of town meetings on "Homosexuality in the Black Community," a media monitoring component, coalition work and a more active role in electoral politics and political organizing. Call Kevin McGruder at the GMAD office for more information.

▲ GMAD expresses its thanks to **The Body Shop** at 125th /street at 5th Avenue and **A Different Light Bookstore** in the West Village for their support in sponsoring a gift basket and gift certificate, respectively for the June 24th *Blue Lights in the Basement* party in Harlem

The **Body Shop**, located in Harlem, is managed by GMAD supporter, Henry Boyd. Five (5) percent of all net profits from his store is reinvested in the Harlem community. **A Different Light Bookstore** on West 19th Street is the largest supplier of books and magazines of gay and lesbian interests and stock a considerable number of titles of interest to gay and lesbians of African descent.

In the spirit of cooperative economics, we ask that you consider these merchants for your shopping needs.

▲ **"Ask Mr. G"** Do you have questions about relationships, health, spirituality, coming out and mental or physical abuse? Ask Mr. G! Responses to your questions will be provided by a professional with twenty years experience with individuals and groups. Send your letters to:

"Ask Mr. G"
GMAD
248 West 14 St., 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10011

GMAD Forums

September 1998

FRIDAY NIGHT FORUMS

September 4th [This meeting will be held at the GMAD office, 248 W 14 St., 2nd Floor]

Movie Night: Blind Faith

Set in the 1950's and starring Charles Dutton, Kadeem Hardison and Lonette McKee, *Blind Faith* chronicles the story of a young Bland man accused of murder, and afraid of betraying his policy officer father's trust by revealing his homosexual relationship with a friend. *Dudley White. Facilitator.*

September 11th - Sexless Shops

A discussion of Mayer Giuliani's "Quality of Life" crackdown on adult bookstores. Is it cleaning up our community or pushing our brothers to take even greater risks to find companionship? We will have a panel discussion with representatives from the Audre Lorde project, GMAD's peer education component, and a manager from a prominent bookstore located in the Village. *Donald Powell and Michael Jones Facilitators.*

September 18th - Domestic Partnership

New York City recently passed a law conveying benefits to people who are registered as domestic partners whether they are homosexual or heterosexual couples. Are we selling ourselves short for advocating and accepting domestic partnership? Should our ultimate goal to be obtain the freedom to marry? *Reggie Shuford, Facilitator.*

September 25th - Friendship

What happens when a friendship intervenes with a relationship? What happens when friends turn against one another over a relationship? How do we maintain a healthy friendship? What is a friendship and how can you tell the bad from the good in a friendship? *Facilitator, Rick Williams*

OVER 50 FORUM

The Over 50 Forum meets at 3:00 p.m. on the second and fourth Sundays of each month (September 13th and 27th) at the GMAD office.

YO! GMAD FORUMS

September 5th - No Meeting

September 12th - Back to School

September 19th - The Dating Game

September 26th - Open Discussion

YO! GMAD meets every Saturday from 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. at the GMAD office.

BETWEEN THE COVERS

This month the GMAD book club will meet on Sunday, September 27th at 5:00 p.m. This month's book is *Waiting in Vain* by Colin Channer.

The GMAD offices are located at 248 West 14th Street, second floor (neat 8th Avenue). The Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center is located at 208 West 13th Street
To get to either, take the A, C, E, F, 1, 2, 3, 9 or PATH trains to 14th street Station or the L train to the 8th Avenue Station.

September 1998

GMAD Planner

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
August S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31		*1* 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM ET *HIV Treatment - Part I*	*2*	*3* 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM Sex & Sexuality	*4* **GMAD Happy Hour** Movie: Blind Faith	*5* **YO! GMAD:** No Group
6	*7* Labor Day - Office Closed	*8* 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM ET *HIV Treatment - Part II*	*9* Mentor Program Training - Boundries Mini Ball	*10* Narcotics Anonymous	*11* **GMAD Happy Hour** Forum: Sexless Shops	*12* **YO! GMAD:** Back to School Meeting
13 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM **Over 50 Forum**	*14* 6:30 PM - 9:00 PM Movie Night	*15* 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM ET *HIV Treatment - Part III*	*16* 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM Ear Acupunture 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM Recovery/ Relapse	*17* 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM Sex & Sexuality Narcotics Anonymous	*18* **GMAD Happy Hour** Forum: Domestic Partnership	*19* **YO! GMAD:** The Dating Game: How we Date & Why
20 **Aferican American Day Parade - Begins 12:30**	*21* 6:30 PM - 9:00 PM Game Night	*22* 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM ET *HIV Treatment - Part IV*	*23* 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM Project Millenium: YA Open Rap Group	*24* Narcotics Anonymous	*25* **GMAD Happy Hour** Forum: Friendship	*26* **YO! GMAD:** Community Awareness Day at GMAD 2 to 5 pm
27 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM **Over 50 Forum**	*28* 6:30 PM - 9:00 PM Movie Night	*29* 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM ET *HIV Treatment - Part V*	*30* 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM Recovery/ Relapse			

October

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Community Announcements

- **Steal This Radio:** William Jones of Oakland, CA announces that tapes of his radio show focusing on Pan African gay men's liberation will be rebroadcast on *Steal This Radio* at 88.7 FM on Fridays from 7 to 8 p.m.
- **The Audre Lorde Project** is a center for lesbian, gay, bisexual, two-spirited and transgender people of color communities based in Brooklyn, Groups on site include a gay men of color rap/discussion group; a lesbian, bisexual rap/discussion group; and a Friday drop-in group for persons under 24 years of age. For more information or to get on the mailing list, call (718) 596-0342
- **Black gay men who are HIV+** can attend a confidential support group every Monday from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Call PWAC at (212) 647-1415 for additional information.
- **The Dandy Black Brigade** - a collective of Black gay musicians, holds its regular meeting on the second Saturday of each month from 2:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. at the Audre Lorde Project, 85 So. Oxford Street, Brooklyn. All persons with an interest in music are welcome. Call (718) 919-5595.
- **G Mosaic** - a social/support group for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people of color meets every first and third Friday of each month at the Triangle Community Center, 25 Van Zant Street (1st Floor), Norwalk, Connecticut. For further information, contact G Mosaic coordinator Nasheed Abdul-Wakil at 203-854-7726 (leave a message).
- **New York Foundation for the Arts** is Offering fellowships/grants up to $7.000.00 for NYC based artist, writers, dancers for their 1998-99 term. Please call (212) 366-6900 fir additional information. Please note the deadline for applications October 5, 1998. GMAD contact person is D. V. Brooks at (212) 222-2154.
- **"Money For Artists Forum"** will be held at The Countee Cullen Library on Wednesday, September 23rd at 5:30 p.m., location 140 West 136th Street, between Lenox Ave. and Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd. GMAD contact person is D. V. Brooks at (212) 222-2154.
- **Empire State Pride Agenda:** Help elect gay candidates, along with supportive and progressive candidates in the upcoming Fall 1998 elections. Volunteers are needed to work with the Empire State Pride Agenda, New York State's lesbian and gay political advocacy organization in support of several key state Senate and Assembly races. We are especially interested in people willing to provide a minimum of two hours of campaign work for the September 15th Democratic primary. Call Ralph at (212) 627-0305 for more information.
- **The Griot Circle** - a gathering of older Afro-American lesbian, gay men, bisexual, two-spirited, and transgender persons meets regularly at the Aundre Lorde Project, 85 So. Oxford Street, Brooklyn. For information call (718) 596-0342, ext. 20.
- **Other Countries:** Black Gay Expression holds a weekly workshop for Black gay writers every Saturday, 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center. All interested persons are encouraged to attend. For additional information call (718) 569-0342.
- **People of Color in Crisis (POCC)** - is seeking men willing to serve as buddies for people with AIDS. They would also like to put you in touch with people with AIDS who are in need of a buddy or other POCC services. Call (718) 230-0770.
- **A Group of Our Own** is a place for Disabled Gays and Lesbians to come to share and discuss the issues of concern. The group has no political agenda and does not align with any political group/party. For more information about this "old-fashioned rap group," contact Dennis at (718) 573-8193.
- **S.H.A.D.E.S Inc.** is a Black male organization based in New Jersey. Meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesday at All Saints' Episcopal Church in Orange, NJ. Please call the S.H.A.D.E.S. office for directions to the rap/discussion group.
- **Unity Fellowship Church** under the pastorship of Rev. Zachary Jones, holds weekly Sunday services at St. Mary's Church on Classon Ave. at Willoughby Street, Brooklyn at 3:30 p.m. For further information, call the church office at (718) 636-5646

The 1998 Gay Men of African Descent Charles Angel Awards

The 1998 Angel Awards presentation will be held on Saturday evening, December 5th (location to be announced). Six awards, (named for GMAD's founder, will be presented to individuals who have made noteworthy contributions to the Black, gay community. If you would like to nominate someone, please include information about your nominee(s) below.

I am nominating _____ for a 1998 GMAD Angel award because:

_____
_____
_____
_____

I am nominating _____ for a 1998 GMAD Angel award because:

_____
_____
_____
_____

I am nominating _____ for a 1998 GMAD Angel award because:

_____
_____
_____
_____

Nomination forms should be faxed (212)414-9351 or mailed (GMAD, 248 W. 14th St., 2nd fl., N.Y., N.Y. 10011) by **September 30th**. The GMAD Board of Directors will make final decisions regarding awards. Call (212)414-9344 for information.

8/24/98

Constructing Blackpoemology:

A Quick Interview with Playwright David V. Brooks

Q: First of all, David, what is "Blackpoemology?"

A: "Blackpoemology" is a play; a collection of 87 poems/prose and monologues written over a twenty-one year period. "Blackpoemology" describes my journey as a black, gay man living, loving, and working in America. It covers a wide range of topics from the Transatlantic Slave Trade to the AIDS epidemic. It even mentions the Artist Formerly Known as Prince's party to end all parties come 1999!

Q: What do you hope to accomplish with this play?

A: For over the past twenty some odd years, I have sat silently and watched my loved ones; especially my lesbian and gay brothers (but not exclusive of my heterosexual associates -- for I do have a balance of support.) I have watched their dreams and talents dry up like raisins in the sun, all because of the profound impact of the AIDS/HIV crisis. This play is a legacy of some, if not all, the people gay or straight that I have known. Poet and educator Nikki Giovanni said on black people need to start (again), telling our stories. "Blackpoemology" is the story of my journey and coming out, which I hope will help someone else, regardless of sexual preference or race, who's dealing with life, period!

Q: Recently, you gave a professional reading of "Blackpoemology." How did it go?

A: After all of the wrinkles were ironed out, I was very pleased. The audience was a mixture of family, friends, co-workers, GMAD members and the general public. I'm looking forward to performing two additional readings and perhaps a full scale production in 1999. My next reading I would like to host as a GMAD fundraiser for Black his/herstory month.

Q: Can you give us any information about audition information for the full-scale production?

A: I am currently placing notices up around NYC at the community center, college theater clubs and with the Lord's blessing, I will start calling people back at the end of October '98.

Q: Anything else you want to tell our readers?

A: Basically, the choreopoem is about men of colour healing and nurturing one another; as fathers, son, brothers and lovers. I would like to keep in mind that it's a play written by a black gay man, about men of various backgrounds.

Cruising for Sex: *A Clear and Ever Present Danger*

Ronald K. Barrett, Ph.D.

Violence against gays has been a traditional part of the gay experience. Historically gay men and women have been victims of both overt and covert violent biased crimes. Most gay men and women come to accept the rejection and often overt attacks as part of being gay. However with the passage of time, public health education, as well as a staggering toll of HIV-related losses, most gays have worked through denial and come to realize HIV is a formidable threat to their survival. We have shifted most of our attention towards the fight against HIV/AIDS. We have come a long way to marshaling considerable resources to deal with HIV/AIDS as one of the major causes of death of young Blacks and Hispanics between the ages of 25-44 years of age. In her book *Good Health for African Americans* Barbara Dixon reports that Blacks are 250% more likely of dying of HIV/AIDS than Whites. However the risk of Blacks dying of a violent death (e.g., homicide) is 500% greater than that of Whites. There is no empirical data or estimates of mortality risk for Black gays. It is reasonable to assume that those estimates of risk would be as high and probably higher. And yet is seems that while the seriousness of HIV/AIDS epidemic has warranted our focusing on HIV, we somehow have seemingly lost sight of violence as a clear and ever present danger.

Violence and similar manifestations of biased crimes against gays continues to threaten and compromise the quality of life and well being of countless numbers of gay men and women. Recent crime statistics for 1996 reveal an increase in violent biased crimes against gays. It is noteworthy that new empirical research investigations on the manner and incidence of violence among members of the gay community (e.g. relationship battering and abuse, sexual assault, threats and intimidation, etc.) suggest this is an area also worthy of more attention and systematic investigative focus. However a preliminary comparative analysis suggests the lethality of the violence seems greater from agents outside the gay community than from agents inside (i.e. other gays). Homophobia, bigotry and intolerance continue to cause gays to be at risk of violence. In other words, to be identified as gay can be hazardous to your health and well being. The recent discoveries of the bodies of two young Black gay males, one in Prospect Park on June 26, 1998, and another in his home in Greenwich Village on August 18, 1998, reminds us of violence as a clear and ever present danger.

(Continued on page 11)

BLACK PRIDE IN NYC - *Finally*

By Rod McCoy

During the weekend of July 30th through August 2nd, an estimated 5,000 people gather as New York City held its first ever **Black Pride NYC '98 Celebration**. The Black Pride organizing committee consisted of the following groups: African Ancestral Lesbians United for Societal Change (AALUSAC); Gay Men of African Descent (GMAD); U-Men Entertainment and Colours Magazine, organizations that promote popular dances for men and women respectively; the writing group Other Countries: Black Gay Expression.

black pride! 98 nyc
...finally!
ORGANIZERS
AFRICAN ANCESTRAL LESBIANS UNITED FOR SOCIETAL CHANGE (FORMERLY SALSA SOUL) GAY MEN OF AFRICAN DESCENT, U-MEN ENTERTAINMENT COLOURS MAGAZINE AND OTHER COUNTRIES: BLACK GAY EXPRESSION
SPONSORS
July 30 - August 2

Kicking off the weekend was **The Opening Forum and Pride Reception**, held at the Lesbian and Gay community Services Center. The theme of the evening was a question often posed to members of the Black Pride Organizing committee "Why Black Pride?" Giving some reflections were Candice Boyce, founder of AALUSC, Sheila Stowell, director of Community Education and Organizing at the Audre Lorde Project; Eric Flavors, a board member of In The Life Atlanta, that city's Black Pride committee; Courtney Williams and Earl Fowlkes from Washington, D.C.; and James Saunders, founder of U-Men Entertainment. Following the forum and reception, many of us headed uptown for the **Harlem Mixer at the Lenox Lounge**, one of the many parties planned for the Pride Weekend. This one stood out for me because it was the only co-gender dance, and it is a rare occasion where the men and women really mingle.

Friday was a **Cultural Celebration**, a mini-concert at the Harlem School of the Arts, featuring some of New York's finest Black Lesbian and gay performing artists. Opening the ceremony was a wonderful libation to the ancestors by Rev. Dana Rose, accompanied by the wonderful drumming of Panama. Emcees for the evening were comedians Sharon Williams and Mark Fowler, who delighted the uptown crowd with their musings of Black Gay and Lesbian Life, and their takes on Black Pride.

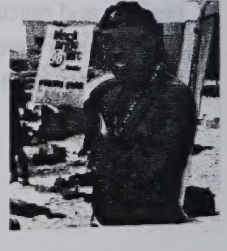
Featured was the dance company of ronald k. brown/evidence, who turned the audience out with "Better Days, " an erotically charged four-man tribute to the club of the same name. Also on hand was Unity Fellowship NYC Gospel Choir, who gave the evening a powerful and spiritual uplift with "I've Got a Testimony" and "The Lord Is My Light and My Salvation." There was also the soulful blues of Suhir Blackeagle, one of New York's rising music divas. Poet d'Jahma Sentwali gave the audience much to think about with "Nommo Mr. Nice Guy" (a blistering attack on the homophobia of may Black Nationalists) and Freaky Deaky Dawg" (an erotic piece that gives new meaning to "hot dog between warm buns on a cold winter night").Rounding out the evening was the sassy and sexy numbers by the award winning cabaret troupe, The PAC (The Performing Arts Chorale) under he direction of Ms. Miche Braden.

After the celebration, the boys rushed off to Octagon for the **Official Men's Party**; the **Official Women Party** was held at The Warehouse in the Bronx.

It was all about Brooklyn on Saturday. The AM was spent at the Audre Lorde Project for the Community Workshops and Forums.

By most accounts, the highlight was the **Community Picnic and Vendor Marketplace**. Held at Fort Green Park in Brooklyn. Various vendors (including a few community based AIDS service organizations like People of Color in Crisis) and the delicious food from the Pride Committee's Keisha Bell contributed to the feeling of family that permeated this packed event.

Some trekked back to the Audre Lorde Project later in the evening for the **Black Pride Book Signing and Reading**. This years special guests were poets Pamela Sneed (author of "Imagine Being More Afraid of Freedom Than Slavery"), and Cheryl Boyce Taylor ("Raw Air") as well as authors James Earl Hardy and Thomas Glave.



A beautiful Sunday morning found most of us on the shores of the Atlantic at Riis Beach in Brooklyn for the **Black Pride Beach Party**, a good turnout of warm friendly lesbians and

gays made for a very memorable and enjoyable day.

Closing out the Black Pride NYC on Sunday evening were three (yes 3) official parties. For the ladies there was the **Network Party** sponsored by *Colours* Magazine held at the Palm Court in downtown Brooklyn. The men attended another event hosted by James Saunders and party promoter Charles Jackson.

The biggest surprise was the **Blue Lights in the Basement** party held a Rockwell's, the newest Black Gay and Lesbian after hours spot in Brooklyn. Thanks to a great mix of 70's, 80's and 90's dance tunes , we were all able to enjoy ourselves.

Overall, it was a wonderful weekend, full of Black Pride! Hope to see you there next year.

CARIBBEAN PRIDE:

Dialogue and Thoughts with Tamara Jones and Colin Robinson on Queer Caribbean Experiences

Interviewed By David Jones

It all started with a small group of people who got together to discuss their connections as queer Caribbean, recent attempts at organizing and what they might do in the future. In particular the central reason for meeting was hostile politics back home in the Caribbean and what they could do about it. Toward the end of the meeting there was a suggestion of "let's put the Mas (masquerade) in the parade {The NYC Pride March}." Others joined in on the idea and it quickly became a project with weekly meetings.

By a few weeks away from the Pride March, the organizers had acquired a truck and a DJ. The plan was to have just a "small music thing", but somehow the energy kept building, with a major surge at Brooklyn Pride. Then the Audre Lourde Project (ALP) helped with, among other things, space and a phone line. People of Color in Crisis (POCC) also stepped in and sponsored the truck for Pride Day and organizers developed a flyer for outreach.

As the momentum grew and people had the energy and the interest to work, parties were thrown at people's homes, and guests made signs and banners for Pride Day. All of a sudden the group grew into a "contingent."

It was the day of the march and the contingent busied itself with decorating and setting-up what was now a BIG truck. As Caribbean music rang through the noise of the crowds, people came as if they were following a beacon. Before the parade had even begun, there was a party at the Caribbean "float."

Once the parade started, the crowd roared. People pushed toward the barricades on the street to grab the informational palm cards announcing the new group. There was tremendous excitement, and people, who had come with friends, abandoned them on the sidewalks to join the dancing crowd that had formed behind the truck.

By the end of the day, 6 original organizers had turned into 300 people who enjoyed, for the first time ever in the parade, the chance to celebrate a part of their identity in a Caribbean context. A week later, a brunch attracted 40 people to continue the spirit of that day and Caribbean Pride was born.

Mission Statement and Focus

Caribbean Pride has a social and a political focus. Many of the Members have stressed, however, that too many energies can be put into building organizational structure--that before this can happen, people need to be clear about what they want. Because of this, Caribbean Pride does not yet have a formal mission. Instead, the group has three "watch words" that help give it an overriding vision--"Celebration," "Community" and "Visibility."

For now, the focus during meetings is to share experiences and educate each other about issues--as well as tackle the challenge of having a group of people who are at different levels of understating with regard to political issues and the role of activism. This open structure makes the organization fluid and organic, and the decision making more democratic.

FUTURE PLANS AND GOALS

Currently, Caribbean Pride is engaged in building its organizational base, strengthening its Membership--in numbers and in political understanding--and strengthening the organization itself. A major goal of the organization includes identifying and working with indigenous groups in the US and the Caribbean to help organize campaigns for queer people. Caribbean Pride seeks to connect with gay and straight communities and create a forum for lesbians and gays- building organizations here and in the Caribbean.

But it will not be easy. Members of the organization have realized the challenges they will face in determining when they can intervene in the Caribbean--that it will require thought and thorough planning. Lesbian and gay Caribbean people remain vulnerable to being labeled as "outsiders" not only because of their sexual identities but also because some have lived in the US for a long time. Additionally there is the belief that being lesbian or gay is a "white thing"--that it is tainted , not a part of being Caribbean, that it is of "Babylon" {western, foreign and evil}.

Recently the organization held a successful beach party; sponsored a workshop, entitled "Black Like Who," during the first annual NYC Black Pride events; sent an introductory media release to every Caribbean diplomatic and tourist mission in NYC and held a women's gathering in Brooklyn. Future projects include: a Labor Day event in conjunction with the West Indian Day Parade; developing a newsletter to circulate in the US and the Caribbean as a way of highlighting resources for queer people; and creating a website for better visibility, as well as to share information. The organization also hopes to address family-related issues--i.e., parenting, coming out to family--since these topics have come up during meetings. Religion has also come up.

Organizational Structure and Participants

Caribbean Pride meets weekly at the ALP. The meeting is business oriented as well as social oriented. There are approximately 50 Members of which about two thirds are women. The group encompasses various identities: those born in the Caribbean, those with one or both parents born in the Caribbean and those with an interest in reclaiming their Caribbean identity. While the meetings are open to anyone who wishes to attend, discussions are grounded in the Caribbean experience.

Why Come Together: The Need To Organize

Prior to the formation of Caribbean Pride, there were conversations among Caribbean on what many participants called the "queer Caribbean confusion" for months. Additionally many discussions centered on what role queer Caribbean could play in counteracting the biased media coverage of lesbian and gay issues in the Caribbean, as well as how they could establish a better understanding of the complexities of the lesbian/gay Caribbean identity and how it is played out politically in the Caribbean.

Many international concerns were voiced. One was the prison riots in Jamaica were condoms had been made available to prisoners and guards went on strike--resulting in the deaths of 20 prisoners suspected of being homosexuals. Another was the Cayman Islands banning of a gay cruise ship--with Belize and the Bahamas allowing it to dock. Yet the media ignored the role that Nationalism, Anti-colonialism, economics and tourism played into this conflict, as well as the resulting backlash and support experienced by queer Caribbean.

Meanwhile, there were past local concerns that were also discussed. One was how the visibility of Caribbean and the various cultures within the Caribbean identity could be better framed within HIV programming for it to be more effective. Another was that half of the Black population in NYC is immigrant or the children of immigrants. Yet no one would know this through the media or any other venue. It is simply not discussed--whole neighborhoods in NYC that are Caribbean, yet totally invisible.

For some, Black lesbian and gay organizations are not always a safe space to share intimate details and feel that you are understood as a Caribbean. Often the African American experience becomes the unquestioned assumption. Still Members realize a need to organize within Caribbean communities and apart from them. They see the need to come together, that it's not always about struggle but about forming shared visions and clarifying race, sexuality, and experience--as well as strategies--for survival.

Yet there are many issues that can block people--any people--from coming together. We all occupy positions of privilege and sometimes of oppression. Sometimes we are positioned differently politically and there is a fear on both sides of having a conversation on these differences--that it would weaken us as a unified Black movement. There is also the eroticism of cultures by the general media and tourism that wants to make them homogenized and devoid of any political conflict. There is also a lack of knowledge of colonialism and its effects; immigration status and how it shapes the lives of people.

Now with Caribbean Pride, Members can meet and talk about cultures in common; family themes; do a lot of story telling; and share experiences surrounding classism and racism as it effects Caribbean people. For many, there is a sense of having a connection beyond this country, a sense of being trans-national politically and it's about celebrating being Caribbean along with a gay identity.

For more information about Caribbean Pride, call the voice mail line at (718) 596-0342 x34.
Caribbean Pride
c/o Audre Lorde Project
85 So. Oxford St.
Brooklyn NY 11217

The African American Day Parade

The 30th Annual African American Day Parade is Sunday, September 20th at 1:00 p.m. The parade's purpose is to celebrate African American heritage throughout the city. Organizers call it the largest Black parade in America. Over 900,000 people are expected to attend. All participating organizations should report to 112th Street and Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Blvd. (7th Ave.) by 12:30 p.m. The parade marshals will direct everyone to

their exact line-up position. The Parade ends at approximately 143rd Street.

Following the parade, Kevin McGruder will be hosting a reception at 345 West 145th Street (St. Nicholas/Edgecombe) at 4 p.m.

For more information, please contact: African American Day Parade, Inc. P.O. Box 501, College Station, New York, N.Y. 10030, (212)348-3080. Abe Snyder is the Chairman. Tamar Norman is another contact.

Ask Mr. "G"

Mister "G"

I am a 42-year-old African-American male and all my life I have prided myself on being in the best of physical health. I guess I became obsessed with staying health because most of the people my age have wither died from AIDS or have the HIV virus. And yes I'm one of the people who use to party like everyone else and slept with multiple partners like everyone else but so far or at least the last time I was tested I'm negative. I don't know why I'm writing you accept to say that lately I have been feeling tired and getting a lot of sore throats. You may say so what … but I have never been ill in my life and I'm a little scared. I have not been tested in about two years and I really don't think I should. Don't get me wrong I've been to the doctors and they can's find anything wrong with me all they do is give me antibiotics for y throat. What do you think?

DEAR 42 YEAR OLD

It concerns me that someone your age who is as health conscious as you say you are is struggling with this issue. I'm tempted to ask did you learn anything from your friends who have passed on? Okay, maybe you didn't… For all of you readers who are lets say age 38 to 53, the baby boomers, a wise gay man once said "with age comes great wisdom and responsibility." The first responsibility is to yourself as those of us who are among the living have to realize that we are left on this earth for a reason. In order for us to realize our reason it is imperative that we take care of our health especially in this time of HIV/AIDS epidemic. This space is too short for me to get into the reasons why testing for HIV on a regular basis is important not only to your health but also to the health of your partners. I thought that type of thinking went out with fade haircuts. I think you know what you have to do. All you need is the courage. There are plenty of health programs and services in New York City who can help you get over your fear. As a matter of fact I know a great place to start… GMAD!!!! (They will connect you to the right places.) Give them a call, the number is (212)414-9344. C'mon be a lion… and be safe!!!

Until next time. - MISTER "G"

Dear Mister "G"

The other day I ran into a friend of mine who had not seen me in about two years. We used to be very close and I wondered what happened to him so I made sure I spoke to him. He looked at me as if he was trying to remember my name. We talked, it was brief and superficial. I got the feeling that he really did not want to talk with me. This hurt me deeply as we use to hang out together all the time. I wanted to ask him what did I do to him but I did not want him to think that I was "on it like that". After we spoke I felt strange and it affected my whole day. What's wrong with me? What's wrong with him?

Sincerely,

Dejected by a friend

Dear Dejected

What's wrong is that an obviously intelligent person such as yourself would spend so much energy worrying about a questionable friendship. From what I can read the two of you were not that close because if you were you would have spoken before this time. Look sweetie we live in a city and an age where things are fleeting and I'm afraid that sometimes this could mean friendships too. Wouldn't it be nice if we could control the people we become close to and make them stay with us or go away? Well hello that's a fantasy and if we are to move on we 'have got to live in reality. Remember never let anyone have the power to control your entire day. It's human nature for them to effect us for a minute but not the whole day. In other words never let them make you sweat!!!

Until next time.

MISTER "G"

Cruising for Sex: *(Continued from page 7)*

While many of the details of the Prospect murder remain unclear, it is evidence of an all too ever clear and present danger.

Most recently Mayor Giuliani's campaign to close many sex-oriented businesses may have some foreseeable dire consequences. While many gay males are more likely to cruise in such establishments, countless number of others also often patronize these businesses. Many such businesses do cater to gays and men who have sex with men (MSM). An unfortunate yet understandably likely outcome of the Mayor's self-styled moralistic campaign and the closing of these businesses will have gays resorting to cruising for sex in public venues. In retrospect perhaps one of the best things about the "good ole days" was the provision of sex in safety and privacy to get our "freak on". The reality of cruising for sex in public venues represents for most and increasingly clear and present danger. Given that reality, consider the following:

"Some Common Sense Suggestions When Cruising for Sex"

1) Cruising "straights" is dangerous and involves many risks. Some might say it is unsafe, risky if not foolish. We all do it. Because of the element of high anxiety and feeling on edge that often goes along with cruising straights, many individuals and personality types tend to become easily addicted to this type of cruising and prefer to only cruise straights. While others opt for the relative security and reduced risk of only cruising other guys in predominantly gay settings.

2) Avoid unfamiliar places and try to stick with places you are familiar with. Unfamiliar settings generally tend to be less safe and more risky should something go wrong. An old rule of thumb applies here- " the safest way to meet someone is through a friend or someone who knows the person." Many safe sex clubs have come into vogue as a means of men meeting other men for sex without the risk and dangers of cruising for sex.

3) Cruising with a buddy reduces risk and elements of danger. At least inform friends when doing blind dates, meeting strangers, or inviting someone you don't know into your home. If you have no one to confide in, keep a diary or leave notes as to your plans for cruising or meeting partners as a way of leaving a clue should something happen.

4) Dress down especially when cruising outside in public places like parks, bathrooms, bookstores, or bars and clubs. *Avoid flashing money, expensive jewelry, stereo equipment, cell phones, and other valuables.* Avoid the ambiguity of not knowing if someone is attracted to *you* or to your valuables.

5) Always carry basic ID and leave excessive cash, credit cards, and other valuables secured at home in safe keeping.

6) Never go home with a stranger or someone you don't know. This should be a general rule of thumb to stick with regardless of how "phyne" or tempting the meeting might seem. Going home with a stranger you don't know and just met is an unsafe practice and involves too many risks often putting you in a very unfair disadvantage. When meeting someone for the first time it is advisable to *exchange numbers* and get to know the person a bit before going home with them or inviting them to your place. *If they are that attractive and interested, it can wait.* If you must or choose to go home with someone, introduce them to someone before leaving the bar or club or let someone know that you are going home with someone you have just met.

7) Remember, "Lust+ alcohol/drugs= impaired judgment". Realize that when in lust and under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, one's judgment tends to be impaired. Much research conclusively shows that our ability to exercise good judgment is seriously compromised.

8) Use caution when cruising in cyberspace, chat rooms, chat lines, and personals! These new (and for some) exciting venues for meeting partners and cruising for sex all involve risk taking. They are very impersonal where you tend to know very little about who you are relating to. *Exercise caution and restraint in divulging too much personal information.* After taking some time to know the person, a first meeting can be arranged, but always in a *neutral, safe and public setting- never at your place or theirs.*

9) "Playing safe!" takes on additional meaning beyond just safe sex. By the way, always carry more than enough protection just in case. Playing safe also means being inventive and creative about getting your needs met without unnecessary risks (e.g., phone sex, videos, fantasy sex, etc.)

10) Use your intuition and "When in doubt- DON'T!" For most of us most of the time our intuition and instincts will not steer us wrong. However, the best rule of thumb is *"When in doubt- don't!"*

11) Never get into a vehicle with a stranger who cruises you on the street. As a passenger in a stranger's vehicle, you are at a disadvantage while the stranger driving has more control, therefore placing you at risk. This risk also applies to getting into a parked car as well. Also *never consent to going for a ride with a stranger and not knowing where you are being taken.* This is not safe.

12) Know that having sex in public places is illegal and involves risks and possibilities of conflict with police and the law.

13) Always strive for balance in your intimate, social and love life. Take a periodic inventory of your love and sex life to see if you are balanced or lack balance in the manner and ways that you are meeting partners. It is probably not balanced nor good for your mental health and socioemotional development and well being if you are predominantly meeting partners via cruising for sex (e.g. parks, tea rooms, bath houses, personals, subways, etc.). A healthy, balanced social and emotional life should include the ability and variety of meeting people in a variety of settings, not just one type. Strive to become more comfortable meeting partners in a variety of places.

Dr. Ronald K. Barrett is a psychologist who is an internationally recognized expert on violence, and consults with groups and organizations locally and nationally.

GMAD Newsletter

Gay Men of African Descent

FEBRUARY 1998 VOLUME 11, NUMBER 7

GMAD

GAY MEN OF AFRICAN DESCENT

MARCH EVENTS 1988

Fridays 8:00 p.m.

3/4 ADODI Brother Ade (G. Allen) Smith, a clinical psychologist will speak on Black Gay Male relationships at Rodney Brown's, 380 East 18th St. #2N, in Brooklyn, (take D or Q train to Cortelyou Road (walk to the right past the Chemical Bank and Met Food) 718-462-1248.

3/11 Experience the Los Angeles Black Lesbian and Gay Conference through the eyes of George Bellinger, Jr., Joe Cohen, Emill Pace, Colin Robinson and others who will share their impressions, photos, cassettes and literature. NOTE: LOCATION TO BE ANNOUNCED - CALL HAROLD OR LAMAR (TELEPHONE NUMBERS AT THE BUTTOM OF THIS PAGE).

3/18 Business meeting at Byron Johns' in Brooklyn, 3510 Ave. H #1J, (#2 to Flatbush Ave. walk to H, turn left and walk to 35th Street, make right at building courtyard) 718-434-5556.

3/25 Consciousness raising session: an exercise in speaking, listening and evaluating. Topic SCHOOL DAZE from a Black Gay Perspective. Things to think about: 1) Is color prejudice still prevalent among people of African descent? 2) How would you charactertize Spike Lee's latest effort? ...a thoughtful and critical look at intra-racial prejudice and hypocrisy, or the trendy raving of a pseudo-intellectual banji? 3) Is the message of the film less important than the fact that it provided more jobs for Black artists? 4) What about homophobia? Where were the Black lesbians and gay men, or is that too much to ask for in 1988?
If you wish to go see the film with GMAD, you can organize a movie outing at a prior meeting. You will receive further instructions about the structure of the evening when you arrive at the meeting, to be held in the Sandy Moss Room at the Gay Community Center 208 W. 13th St. near 7th Ave. in Manhattan.

GMAD is a support group of Black Gay Men dedicated to consciouness raising and the growth and development of the Black Lesbian and Gay Community. Membership registration cards are available at all meetings. The fee is $10 for 6 month or $20 for one year, which entitles you to notification of meetings, voting privileges and discounts on certain fund-raising events.

For all meetings this month, please bring snacks and non-alcoholic beverages to share. Safer sex information, counseling, referrals and condoms will be available.

For general information contact Harold Robinson at 718-756-1548 or Lamar Jackson at 212-683-5092.

Our mailing address is: GMAD - P.O. BOX 1514
Manhattanville Station
New York, NY 10027

So, what were YOU doing ten years ago?

GAY MEN OF AFRICAN DESCENT IS AN ORGANIZATION COMMITTED TO EMPOWERING GAY MEN OF AFRICAN DESCENT THROUGH EDUCATION, SOCIAL SUPPORT, POLITICAL ADVOCACY AND HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROMOTION.

HISTORY = OUR STORY

Once again we continue to celebrate the start of a new year with all of the excitement that February has to offer. Even though this month receives second billing to its predecessor, it offers some reasons of its own as cause for celebration. It is sufficiently early enough in the new year to maintain the excitement of things yet to happen, while at the same time, the chaos and frenzy of the recent holiday season remains but a memory. February also adds the possibility of meeting someone new on Valentine's Day or free time from work responsibilities on President's Day. It also offers other possibilities.

Traditionally, this month is the time when we African-Americans celebrate and pay homage to the trailblazers in our history. We look at their lives, their accomplishments, and their gifts to our generation and generations yet to arrive. Nat Turner, Marcus Garvey, and Ida B. Wells provide inspiration for me when I am confronted with difficult establishments. Ralph Bunche, James Baldwin, and Mary McLeod Bethune provide me with encouragement when I may have to work within uncomfortable situations. Each person offers some valuable insight, some wonderful examples of how to overcome many of life's greatest difficulties.

As gays and lesbians of African descent, our daily challenges to overcome racism, economic disenfranchisement, and homophobia often requires special skills and abilities. Angie and Debbie Winans' recent single, It's Not Natural, stands as an example of the type of homophobia which confronts us. We members, supporters, and constituents of GMAD must celebrate the achievements of our fore parents by following their examples. It is not enough to make honorable mention of their accomplishments. Following well worn paths, we can and we must continue to resist any individual or institution which stands to keep us oppressed.

Charles Angel founded GMAD over eleven years ago as a means to resist racism and homophobia. Let us all continue the vision that he created.

Respectfully yours,

Edward Thomas
Secretary, GMAD Board of Directors

FROM THE EDITOR

Looking for the GMAD Board of Directors list that's usually here? Can't find the Staff listing that's always been on page 3? They along with other information about this publication have been moved to our new masthead, which can now be found on the back page (page 6) right next to our new feature, **Back Space**! The office is the only place that got expanded quarters!

I hope that this format change proves useful to our readers. Thanks for your continued support.

Professor Byron C. Mayes
Editor, *GMAD Newsletter*

GMAD
Gay Men of African Descent

133 West 4th Street • New York, NY 10012-1010 • www.gmad.org
212-420-0773 • Fax: 982 1182 • E-mail: gmad@aol.com

FEBRUARY 1998

FRIDAY NIGHT FORUMS

2/6 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE • How do we address domestic violence when it occurs in relationships between two men? Are Black, gay men more susceptible to domestic violence? What can be done to prevent the occurrence of domestic violence? Join us for an enlightening discussion. — *Facilitator to be announced.*

2/13 THE DATING GAME • Anterested in dating? Do you enjoy fun and excitement? Well, now is your chance to win a date and have fun. You have seen the popular television show, the Dating Game. Tonight, you can be a contestant or an audience member in GMAD+s very own version of this long-time favorite. — *Facilitator, Edward Thomas.*

2/20 GMAD REMEMBERS OUR HISTORY • Did you attend one of the initial meetings of GMAD? Did you participate in a recent, memorable GMAD event? What men have been important to you when you think about GMAD+s history? Come prepared to share your own memories of GMAD. It+s Our Story. — *Facilitator, Kevin McGruder.*

2/27 GMAD MEMBERSHIP • What does membership in GMAD mean to you? What privileges should come with membership in GMAD? What can we do to increase membership? — *Facilitator, Ernest Montgomery.* *This meeting will be preceded by a brief presentation from Mark Green, NYC Public Advocate*

All GMAD Friday Night Forums are held at 8:00 p.m. in the Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center, 208 West 13th Street, unless otherwise noted. Take the A, C, E, F, 1, 2, 3, 9 or PATH trains to 14th Street Station or the L train to 8th Avenue Station.

OVER FIFTY FORUM

Meets 3:00 p.m. on the second and fourth Sundays of each month (in February, the 8th & 22nd) at the Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center

YO! GMAD FORUMS

2/7 MOVIE NIGHT • With **Sparkle** and **Black is...Black Ain't.**

2/14 VALENTINE'S DAY PARTY • All GMAD is invited.

2/21 OPEN DISCUSSION DAY • Whatever the issue, now is the time to talk about it.

2/28 ICE SKATING • Well, you asked when the next time would be, didn't you?

All YO! GMAD forums meet Saturday afternoons at 4:30 p.m. at the GMAD offices, 248 West 14th Street, second floor (near 8th Avenue), unless otherwise noted. Take the A, C, E, F, 1, 2, 3, 9 or PATH trains to 14th Street Station or the L train to 8th Avenue Station.

February 1998

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3 •Harlem On My Mind, Part I	4 •Project Millenium: Open Rap Group	5	6 •GMAD Happy Hour •Friday Night Forum: Domestic Violence	7 • YO! GMAD: Movie Night
8 •Over Fifty Forum	9	10 •Harlem On My Mind, Part II	11 •Project Millenium: Open Rap Group	12	13 •GMAD Happy Hour •Friday Night Forum: Dating Game	14 • YO! GMAD: Valentine's Day Party
15	16	17 •Harlem On My Mind, Part III	18 •Project Millenium: Open Rap Group	19	20 •GMAD Happy Hour •Friday Night Forum: GMAD Remembers Our History	21 • YO! GMAD: Open Discussion
22 •Over Fifty Forum •Between the Covers	23	24 •Harlem On My Mind, Part IV	25 •Project Millenium: Open Rap Group	26	27 •GMAD Happy Hour •Friday Night Forum: Membership	28 • YO! GMAD: Ice Skating

For more info call the events line @212-420-0773 x15

GMAD Announcements

New Office Open House! • On January 10, GMAD moved to new, larger office space at **248 West 14th Street, 2nd floor** (near 8th Avenue). Our new phone number is **212-414-9344**; and the new fax number is **212-414-9351**. On Friday, February 20 from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. we will host an open house for GMAD members and friends at our new office space. Call the office if you have questions.

Looking for something to do or someplace to go before Friday night meetings? Beginning Friday, February 6, GMAD will begin weekly **Friday Happy Hours** from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. at the GMAD office, 248 West 14th Street, 2nd Floor. Stop by for refreshments (no alcohol), listen to music, watch television, chat, play cards, and then head off to the meeting at the Center. Call the GMAD office at 212-414-9344 for further information.

The **Board of Directors** of GMAD will hold its next meeting Thursday, February 12, 6:30 p.m. at the GMAD office. This and all regular meetings are open to all.

In recognition of Black History Month, GMAD will present **Harlem On My Mind** a four-part class on Harlem history taught by Michael Adams and Kevin McGruder. All classes will be held at the GMAD office from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. The class sequence will be as follows:

Part I, Tuesday February 3: Harlem 1600-1910
Part II, Tuesday, February 10: Harlem 1910-1945
Part III: Tuesday, February 17: Gay Harlem - Clubs, Bars, etc.
Part IV: Tuesday, February 24: Gay Harlem- Personalities

For more information call Kevin McGruder at the GMAD office, 212-414-9344

GMAD's book club, **Between the Covers**, is reading ***What's Going On*** by **Nathan McCall**. Join us on Sunday, February 22 at 5:00 p.m. for a lively discussion. Call the GMAD office for the location.

GMAD's **Outreach Committee** is looking for a few dedicated members to work along with the Board of Directors and staff in the effort to increase the visibility of GMAD in the community. The volunteers will attend community activities, set up a table to distribute information about GMAD, speak on panels, and promote GMAD's objectives. Contact Woody Brown or call the GMAD office for more information.

GMAD regrettably announces the passing of our friend

Joel Cunningham

in early January following surgery.

Joel was also a frequent attendee at GMAD functions. In 1996 he facilitated a GMAD Friday Forum on Personal investment, a topic in which he had a great interest. He also maintained an active interest in real estate, having recently purchased his own home in New Jersey. His upbeat personality, sense of humor, and quick smile will be greatly missed by the GMAD family.

Expressions of sympathy may be sent to his aunt, Mrs. Margaret Brown, at 4335 Dereimer Avenue; Bronx, New York 10466.

Beginning Friday, February 7, **G Mosaic**, a social/support group for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people of color will meet every first and third Friday of each month at the Triangle Community Center, 25 Van Zant Street (1sts floor), **Norwalk, Connecticut.** For further information, contact G Mosaic coordinator, Nasheed Abdul-Wakil at 203-854-7726 (leave a message).

Barbara Smith invites GMAD members and friends to make reservations now for an event to launch ***The Reader's Companion to U.S. Women's History***. The *Reader's Companion* is an encyclopedia of U.S. women's history aimed at a general audience co-edited by Smith with Wilma Mankiller, Gwendolyn Mink, Marysa Vavarro, and Gloria Steinem. In this ground-breaking work an effort was made to ensure that women of color, lesbians, and working class women are adequately covered not only in separate articles, but in all relevant entries. Tickets for the February 17th, 8:00 p.m. event are $18.00. Contact the 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave., 212-996-1100 for reservations.

The **Audre Lorde Project** is a center for lesbian, gay, bisexual, two-spirit, and transgender people of color communities based in Brooklyn. Groups on site include a gay men of color rap/discussion group; a lesbian/bisexual rap/discussion group; and a Friday drop-in group for persons under 24 years of age. For more information or to get on the mailing list, call 718-596-0342.

After a brief hiatus following its succesful November 1997 forum, the **Dandy Black Brigade**, a collective of Black gay musicians, will resume its regular, fourth-Saturday, meetings on Saturday, February 28, from 3:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. Call Byron at 718-919-5595 for further information.

Master composer and pianist, **Hakeem Muhammad**, GMAD member and Dandy Black Brigade co-founder, announces the publication of **Inner Voices**, a collection of nineteen spontaneous improvisations on compact disc. The disc will be available for $15.00 (+ $2.00 shipping) after its release. For more information write: Hakeem Muhammad, P.O. Box 233, Williamsbridge Station, Bronx, New York 10467-0233.

Black gay men who are **HIV+** can attend a confidential support group every Monday from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Call PWAC at 212-647-1415 for additional information.

The **Black Gay Men's International Writing Club** offers Back gay men of all ages the opportunity to correspond with each other for a small fee (6 months, £50.00; 1 year, £150.00; 2 years, £250.00, and 3 years, £350.00). One letter to the sponsor along with payment (check or international money order; British currency) will get you started. Contact (Mr.) Dele Alade; 88 Seymour Ave., Tottenham; London N17 9ED; United Kingdom; for further information.

Fathers of Gay Men Study • Learning that one's son is gay may be a major event in the life of a father. Little is known and written about this subject, which is the focus of a scholarly study exploring the range of such experiences. Compensation of $25.00 will be offered to any individuals offering leads which result in an interview. If you are interested in participating, or know someone who might be, contact Andrew Gottlieb at 718-624-0263.

A Group of Our Own, a place for Disabled Gays and Lesbians to come to share feelings, and discuss issues of concern, recently organized. The group has no political agenda and does not align with any political group/party. For more information about this "old-fashioned rap group," contact Dennis at 718-573-8193.

Continued on page 5

GMAD
Gay Men of African Descent

an organization committed to empowering gay men of African descent through education, social support, political advocacy, and health and wellness promotion

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248 West 14th Street
New York, NY 10011

☎ **(212) 414-9344**
FAX **(212) 414-9351**
E-MAIL **gmad@aol.com**
WEB **www.gmad.org**

January 28, 1998

Dear GMAD Member:

As you may know, GMAD has grown dramatically over the past several months. New funding related to HIV prevention programs has allowed us to expand our staff to seven full-time and six part-time employees. On January 10th we moved to larger, renovated office space at 248 West 14th Street.

As we move into our 12th year, GMAD is working to expand our role in both the gay community and the African American community. We want you to be a part of our journey. The February 27th Friday Night Forum will be devoted to a discussion of GMAD membership, and will include discussions on how we can make membership more meaningful, and how we can increase membership. In preparation for the February meeting, we would like to get feedback from you regarding GMAD. Who are our members? What do our members need? What do our members want? What do those who are not members need to become members?

Take a few minutes to complete the attached form to let us know what you think about GMAD, and what you're doing at home, at work and on the social front. This is an open invitation to become an active member in GMAD's strategic planning for the new millennium. Please return this by mail, fax (212)414-9351 or bring it to our office (Monday- Friday between 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.) by Friday, February 13th, and please come to the February 27th Friday Night Forum. Let your voice be heard.

We thank you in advance for your assistance and support.

Sincerely,

Kevin McGruder

Kevin McGruder
Executive Director

1998 Healthy Living Pocket Guide Awards

Non Profit Organization of the Year Award
Us Helping Us-Washington, DC

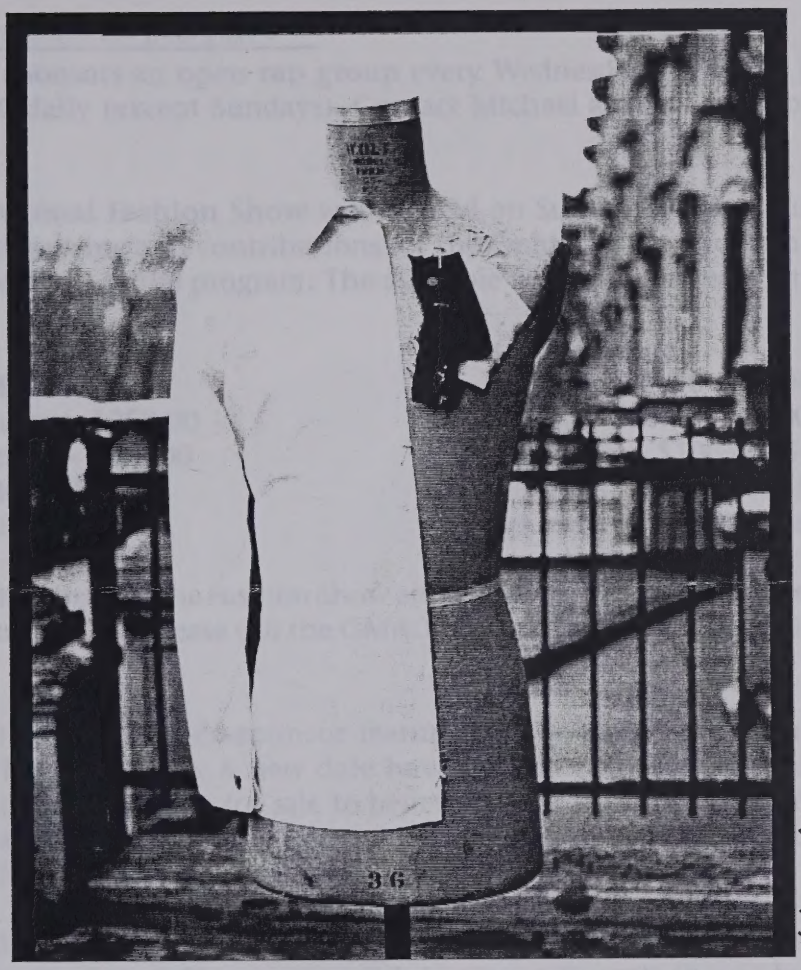
Community Service Woman of the Year Award
Pernessa Seele, The Balm In Gilead, Inc.

Community Service Man of the Year Award
Cornelius Wilson

Health Related Fundraising Event of the Year Award
Black Lesbian & Gay Pride Weekend-DC

Health Related Gay Male Support Group of the Year Award
Gay Men of African Descent, GMAD-NY

Health Related Lesbian Support Group of the Year Award
SisterLove Atlanta



UNDER CONSTRUCTION

The planning for the **7th Annual GMAD Fashion Show** is underway. This year's show will be held on **June 20th at TWIRL**. We need your help to make this a success! Please contact us at our **NEW** office regarding tickets or the next volunteer meeting, 212•414•9344

GMAD Announcements Continued from page 3

Project Millenium sponsors an **open rap group** every Wednesday, 6:00-8:00 p.m. and **Mid-Day Meditation** at 12:30 daily (except Sundays). Contact Michael at the GMAD office for additional details.

GMAD's **Seventh Annual Fashion Show** will be held on Sunday evening, June 20 at Twirl, 208 West 23rd Street. Advertising and contributions for the Fashion Show program are being accepted (contributors will be listed in the program. The available advertising rates/contribution levels are:

Advertising
Back cover- $500.00
Inside front cover- $350.00
Inside back cover- $400.00
Full page- $300.00
1/2 page- $200.00

Contributors
Patrons- $25.00- $49.00
Friends- $50.00- $99.00
Supporters- $100.00- $499.00
Benefactors- $500.00- $999.00
Sponsors- $1,000 or more

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Community Announcements Continued from page 4

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Gay Men of African Descent

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Byron C. Mayes

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Web: www.gmad.org

Back Space
Baby, You Got Back!

Dear Reader,

It's me, your fun, loving, and fun-loving editor, and I'm pleased as the proverbial punch to be addressing you as "Dear Reader" once again! Why? Myriad reasons, of which I will communicate only a few.

First, and foremost, I'm just damn glad to be able to take keyboard under-hand today because I know that I made it through yet another year on this great planet of ours. That's right, I recently celebrated a birthday: number thirty-six, to be exact (and I don't look a day over forty!). In fact, the celebration continues as I write, so I hope that you, Dear Reader, will forgive the minor delay in getting this to you this month. It's a natal thang, you understand.

But it isn't all about me! The Black blessings that have so positively affected GMAD the organization, have "trickled down" to GMAD the newsletter. New office space and new programs mean new announcements and events. That, Dear Reader, means more pages and more features. You can count the pages for yourself. What you are reading right now is the first in a new continuing feature of the ***GMAD Newsletter***. This section — which we're calling, **Back Space** — is an area for expressions by, of, from, and about GMAD's family and community.

What type of expressions? What have you got? Got an opinion or a quick poem (or two)? Give it voice here. Have a small line-art drawing pressed in a folder or a little song buzzing around in your head? Let it out here. Is there a black & white photo waiting to be scanned? We can even work with that. The sky's the limit! Well, the sky and the fact that this space is 4.5 inches wide by 10 inches tall.

Okay, there are a few guidelines in addition to the sky and the size, but nothing too draconian. By submitting your work here, you give us permission to reproduce them in this space, but all works remain the intellectual property of you, their creators. Proper credit will of course be given. Text works will not be edited for spelling or grammar, and no work will be excerpted or cropped without your consent. That will maintain the integrety of your work, but it also means that works which are too long or large may not get make it in.

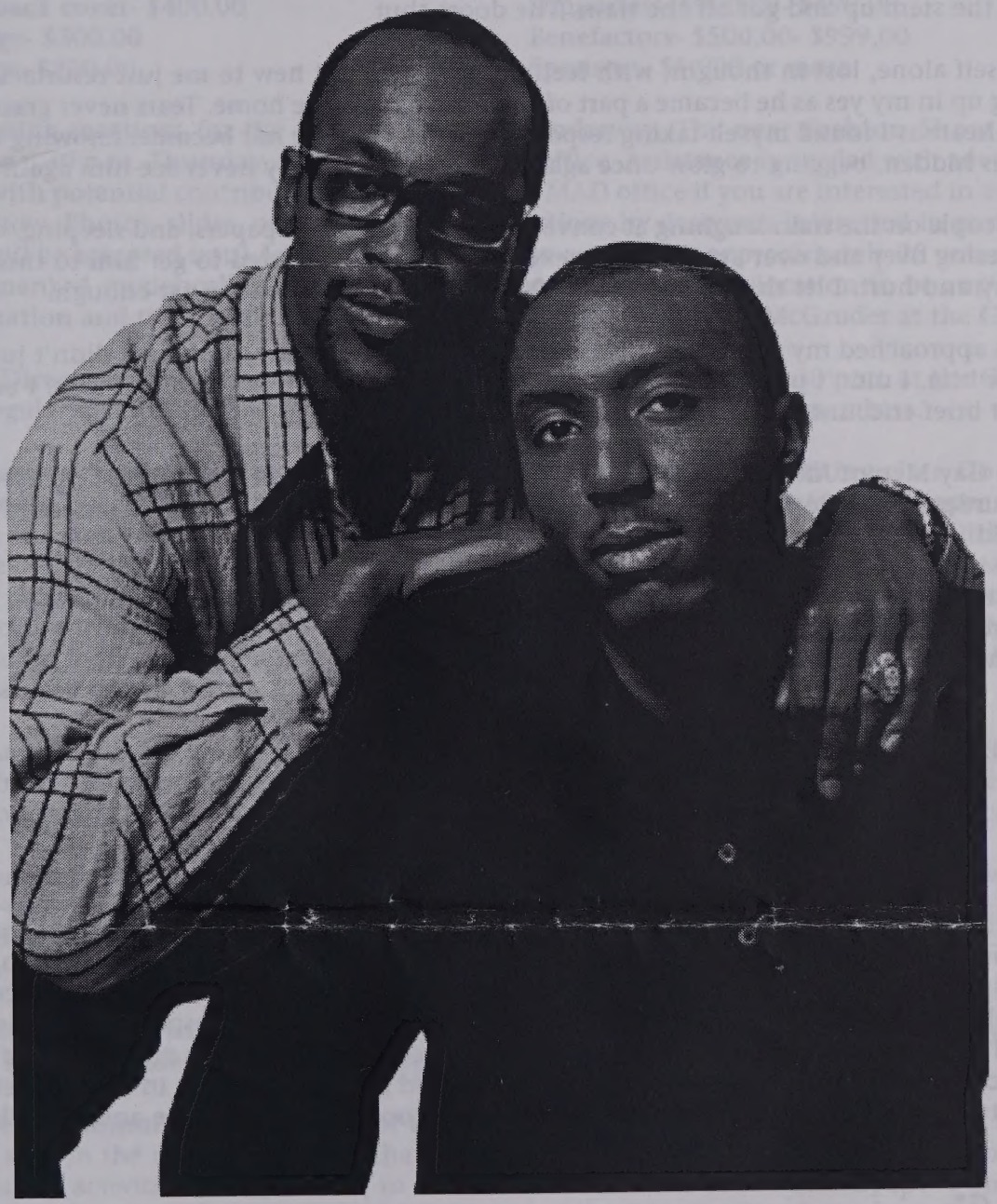
So, I ask you...no, I **challenge** you, Dear Reader, to express yourself here in **Back Space**. This is your space. Let's make some Black History of our own.

Toodles,
Byron

GMAD Newsletter

Gay Men of African Descent

APRIL 1998 VOLUME 11, NUMBER 9



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SPRING HAS SPRUNG!

GAY MEN OF AFRICAN DESCENT IS AN ORGANIZATION COMMITTED TO EMPOWERING GAY MEN OF AFRICAN DESCENT THROUGH EDUCATION, SOCIAL SUPPORT, POLITICAL ADVOCACY AND HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROMOTION.

RANDOM THOUGHTS

Dear GMAD Members,

On March 6, 1998, I was getting on the "C" train at 14th Street when someone dropped something. In a matter of seconds, I looked down and saw what I have come to know as a stem used to smoke crack. As I looked up, there stood a black man about 5 feet 9 inches tall, his left eye bloodshot, his lips dry and cracked, his face grimy. He appeared destitute, perhaps homeless, and sad. He reached down nonchalantly and picked the stem up and got off the train. The doors shut.

I found myself alone, lost in thought, with feelings that were not new to me just resurfacing. I could feel tears rolling up in my yes as he became a part of me, sharing my ride home. Tears never graced my face, but burned my heart as I found myself taking responsibility for what he has become: knowing that a beautiful black man is hidden, begging to glow once again. I would most likely never see him again.

The other people on the train laughing at conversation, reading newspapers, and sleeping, did not stop me from wondering over and over again what event or events had occurred to get him to this point. I found myself angry and hurt. I let this brother down. My hand did not reach out far enough.

As the train approached my station I found myself feeling better. Why? Because I didn't judge this man: I didn't know him. I didn't put myself above him because I am above no one. However, I cared about him and for that brief encounter, that was enough.

I say to you Gay Men of African Descent, take comfort in knowing you are amongst many. Many who can share the burdens, the triumph, the pain, the joy, and the love that is desperately needed to survive in a hostile world.

David Walker
GMAD Board of Directors
Chairperson, Development Committee

"ASK MISTER G" A NEW ADVICE COLUMN!

As an organization GMAD receives a number of letters and inquiries about life's struggles and issues facing all gay, lesbian & transgender people of color. Therefore the organization has decided to us some of its newsletter space as a forum for your questions about relationships, health, spirituality, coming out and mental or physical abuse. The column will be called "Ask Mister G", and responses to your questions will be provided by a professional with twenty years experience with individuals and groups. If you need help with a particular problem let him know and maybe we could use your question in the newsletter. Remember if you are struggling with an issue others are struggling too. So let's help one another! Please send your letters to:

"Ask Mister G"
GMAD
248 West 14th Street, 2nd Floor
New York, N.Y. 10011

GMAD welcomes any comments from its membership.

GMAD Announcements

GMAD's **Seventh Annual Fashion Show** will be held on Sunday evening, June 20 at Twirl, 208 West 23rd Street. Advertising and contributions for the Fashion Show program are now being accepted (contributors will be listed in the program). The available advertising rates/contribution levels are:

Advertising
Back cover- $500.00
Inside front cover- $350.00
Inside back cover- $400.00
Full page- $300.00
1/2 page- $200.00

Contributors
Patrons- $25.00- $49.00
Friends- $50.00- $99.00
Supporters- $100.00- $499.00
Benefactors- $500.00- $999.00
Sponsors- $1,000 or more

Monthly planning meetings for the Fashion Show are underway. The next **Fashion Show Committee** meeting will be 6:30 p.m. Thursday, April 2 at the GMAD office. Assistance is needed with advertising sales and contacts with potential contributors. Please call the GMAD office if you are interested in assisting with the Fashion Show. Photos, slides, or laser copies of collections by designers interested in participating in the program will be accepted until **April 10**. In addition we are seeking approximately 20 volunteer models (men and women). A model call meeting will be held on May 16th (at a location to be announced). For further information and tickets call the Fashion Show voice mail or Kevin McGruder at the GMAD office.

The **Board of Directors** of GMAD will hold its next meeting April 9, 1998, 6:30 p.m. at the GMAD office. This and all regular meetings of the Board of Directors are open to all GMAD members.

GMAD's **Education Tuesdays Series** continues with GMAD's **Business Plan Writing** class. Do you have an idea for a business, but need help working on the details? Learning to put your ideas on paper in a business plan could be the first step to making your dream come true. In three sessions, you will learn how to research and evaluate the potential market for your product or service, how to develop a startup budget and operating projections, and how to develop a plan for growing your business. The classes will take place at the GMAD office from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m., Tuesdays, April 14th, 21st and 28th. All classes are free and will be taught by GMAD Executive Director (and former business owner) Kevin McGruder. For more information call the GMAD office, 212-414-9344.

The **Charles Angel Drop-In Center**, a joint initiative of the **African Village Project** and **Project Millenium**, is now open from 12 noon until 8:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday, at the GMAD office. The center hosts discussion groups, video showings, HIV-prevention seminars, and other educational activities.

Looking for something to do or someplace to go before Friday night meetings? GMAD hosts weekly **Friday Happy Hours** from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. at the GMAD office, 248 West 14th Street, 2nd Floor. Stop by for refreshments (no alcohol), listen to music, watch television, chat, play cards, and then head off to the meeting at the Center. Call the GMAD office at 212-414-9344 for further information.

Project Millenium sponsors an **open rap group** every Wednesday, 6:00-8:00 p.m. and **Mid-Day Meditation** at 12:30 daily (except Sundays). Contact Michael at the GMAD office for additional details.

GMAD's **Outreach Committee** is looking for a few dedicated members to work along with the Board of Directors and staff in the effort to increase the visibility of GMAD in the community. The volunteers will attend community activities, set up a table to distribute information about GMAD, speak on panels, and promote GMAD's objectives. Contact Woody Brown or call the GMAD office for more information.

Get on the Bus, Again! • This year GMAD is working through James Saunders of **U Men Entertainment Network** to coordinate the Washington, D.C. Black Gay Pride weekend bus trip. Buses will leave New York on Friday afternoon, May 22, and return the following Monday, May 24. The weekend rate of $250.00 covers cost of the bus and three night's lodging at the Washington Plaza Hotel. Deposits of $50.00 are due

Continued on page 7

GMAD Forums
April 1998

FRIDAY NIGHT FORUMS

GMAD Friday Night Forums are held at 8:00 p.m. (on Fridays, of course) in the Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center unless otherwise noted.

4/3 Successful Financial Management • What do you do to make sure you don't spend more than you make? How do you avoid the trap of major credit card debt? When and how should you save for retirement? What are the pluses and minuses of various investment opportunities? These and other questions will be answered in this discussion. — *Facilitator, John Mahan*

4/10 Police Brutality in People of Color Communities : Speak Out • New York City's dramatic drop in crime has been accompanied by an increase in reported incidences of police brutality, particularly targeting people of color. This program co-sponsored by GMAD and several other people of color organizations, will feature first-hand accounts by victims of brutality, as well as a discussion on what lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals and organizations can do to address this issue. — *Facilitator to be announced*

4/17 Relationships: Who's in Charge? • Who's in charge? Does anyone have to be in charge? Who compromises? Tonight's program will look at the dynamics of control and power in romantic relationships. — *Facilitators, Donald Powell & Michael Saunders*

4/24 Comedy Night • Come out and enjoy an evening of laughter and fun with some of New York's most talented lesbian and gay comics. — *Facilitator, Michael Saunders*

OVER 50 FORUM

The Over 50 Forum meets at 3:00 p.m. on the second and fourth Sundays of each month (in April, the 12th & 26th) at the GMAD offices.

YO! GMAD

YO! GMAD meets Saturday afternoons at 4:30 p.m. at the GMAD offices unless otherwise noted.

4/4 Learning Self-Awareness, Part One • The first in a four-part series of workshops devoted to learning who we are as Black men.

4/11 Learning Self-Awareness, Part Two • This meeting takes place at the **Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture**, 515 Malcolm X Boulevard; Manhattan. We start our own family tree.

4/18 Learning Self-Awareness, Part Three • Today's meeting deals with issues of self-esteem.

4/25 Learning Self-Awareness, Part Four • Learning to love and respect ourselves and each other is the focus of this chapter in our self-awareness series.

BETWEEN THE COVERS

This month GMAD's book club is reading ***My Brother*** by Jamaica Kincaid. Join us on Sunday, April 19 at 5:00 p.m. for a lively discussion. Call the GMAD office for the location.

The GMAD offices are located at 248 West 14th Street, second floor (near 8th Avenue). The Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center is located at 208 West 13th Street. To get to either, take the A, C, E, F, 1, 2, 3, 9 or PATH trains to 14th Street Station or the L train to 8th Avenue Station.

GMAD
Gay Men of African Descent

an organization committed to empowering gay men of African descent through education, social support, political advocacy, and health and wellness promotion

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E-MAIL **gmad@aol.com**
WEB **www.gmad.org**

I'LL SHOW YOU MINE, IF YOU SHOW ME YOURS

Winter's over and spring is here, so shed those layers and show us what you've got. We need some men and women willing to strut their stuff in the name of fashion. The time is quickly approaching for GMAD's 7th Annual Benefit Fashion Show.

The date has been set (**June 20th**) and location secured (**Twirl, 208 West 23rd St.**). We have approximately twenty model slots to fill for ten designers. If you've always wanted to work the runway, now's your chance. If interested, leave your name and number on the fashion show voice mail (212)414-9344x19 and someone will get back to you with the location for the **May 16th Model Call**. This year is shaping up to be the largest and most successful show and we need you to make it happen.

Because this is a benefit event, all participation is on a volunteer basis. If you have any questions, please contact show producers, James Livingston or Ernest Montgomery at the GMAD office.

Night of 12 Gowns 1998!

Tickets on Sale Now!

Presented by Gay Men of the Bronx

Here's the ticket deal!

- **$15** if **purchased** by April 30
- **$18** after April 30
- **$20** at the door, if available

Fri., May 29 & Sat., May 30, 1998
at 7:00 p.m.
Hostos Center for the Arts and Culture
450 Grand Concourse (at E. 149th St.)
Repertory Theater

To buy tix:

- Call Infoline
  (718) 390-3559 or
  (917) 740-9866
- By credit card, call box office
  (718) 518-4455
  Visa & MasterCard Only

April 1998

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29	30	31	1 • Project Millenium: Open Rap Group	2 • Fashion Show Planning Meeting	3 • GMAD Happy Hour • Friday Night Forum: Successful Financial Management	*4* • YO! GMAD: Learning Self-Awareness, Part I
5	6 • Game/Movie Night	7	8 • Project Millenium: Open Rap Group	9 • Board of Directors Meeting	10 • GMAD Happy Hour • Friday Night Forum: Police Brutality	*11* • YO! GMAD: Learning Self-Awareness, Part II
12 • Over Fifty Forum	13 • Game/Movie Night	14 • ET: Business Plan Writing, Part I	15 • Project Millenium: Open Rap Group	16	17 • GMAD Happy Hour • Friday Night Forum: Relation-ships	*18* • YO! GMAD: Learning Self-Awareness, Part III
19 • Between the Covers	20 • Game/Movie Night	21 • ET: Business Plan Writing, Part II	22 • Project Millenium: Open Rap Group	23	24 • GMAD Happy Hour • Friday Night Forum: Comedy Night	*25* • YO! GMAD: Learning Self-Awareness, Part IV
26 • Over Fifty Forum	27 • Game/Movie Night	28 • ET: Business Plan Writing, Part III	29 • Project Millenium: Open Rap Group	30	1	*2*

Adodi, New York invites you to explore the phenomenon of **Loving My Brother, Loving Myself** at its 1998 **Spring Retreat** Saturday, April 4, 1998. The retreat will be held at the Church of the Intercession, 550 West 155th Street, Manhattan from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Cost is $20.00 and includes admission, program materials, and light refereshments. For further information, contact Robert Brooks (212-926-0043), Jonathan Edwards (212-690-1874), or Haynes (718-379-5274).

Naeem presents **Unda the Bridge** at Number 1 Hot Spot (1 Front Street, Brooklyn) Thursdays beginning April 9, 1998. The party will feature two floors of Hip-Hop, R&B, and Reggae music, and runs from 10 p.m. until 4 a.m. Cost is $7.00 before midnight, and $10.00 from then on. Call 718-246-4611 for more information.

The **Dandy Black Brigade**, a collective of Black gay musicians, holds its next regular meeting on **Saturday, April 11**, from 2:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. at the Audre Lorde Project, 85 South Oxford Street, Brooklyn. Meetings will continue on the first Saturday of each month. This month will feature **Lavender Blues**, a presentation on homosexually-oriented lyrics in the Blues by Professor Byron C. Mayes. Call Byron at 718-919-5595 for further information.

Unchained Fire (Gifting the Universe With You), the **Adodi National Summer Retreat** is scheduled for July 17-19 at Camp Ronora in Watervliet, Michigan. The cost of the weekend is $175.00 if paid in full by **May 12** ($200 thereafter), and includes round-trip ground transportation between Chicago and the campsite, meals and accomodations, and all workshops, social events, and recreational facilities. A special air fare ($172.00 round-trip if paide in full by May 15) is available from Newark Airport to Chicago. Contact Robert Brooks at 212-926-0043 for details.

The **Audre Lorde Project** is a center for lesbian, gay, bisexual, two-spirit, and transgender people of color communities based in Brooklyn. Groups on site include a gay men of color rap/discussion group; a lesbian/bisexual rap/discussion group; and a Friday drop-in group for persons under 24 years of age. For more information or to get on the mailing list, call 718-596-0342.

Black gay men who are **HIV+** can attend a confidential support group every Monday from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Call PWAC at 212-647-1415 for additional information.

The **Black Gay Men's International Writing Club** offers Back gay men of all ages the opportunity to correspond with each other for a small fee (6 months, £50.00; 1 year, £150.00; 2 years, £250.00, and 3 years, £350.00). One letter to the sponsor along with payment (check or international money order; British currency) will get you started. Contact (Mr.) Dele Alade; 88 Seymour Ave., Tottenham; London N17 9ED; United Kingdom; for further information.

Fathers of Gay Men Study • Learning that one's son is gay may be a major event in the life of a father. Little is known and written about this subject, which is the focus of a scholarly study exploring the range of such experiences. Compensation of $25.00 will be offered to any individuals offering leads which result in an interview. If you are interested in participating, or know someone who might be, contact Andrew Gottlieb at 718-624-0263.

G Mosaic, a social/support group for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people of color meets every first and third Friday of each month at the Triangle Community Center, 25 Van Zant Street (1st floor), **Norwalk, Connecticut**. For further information, contact G Mosaic coordinator, Nasheed Abdul-Wakil at 203-854-7726 (leave a message).

The **Griot Circle**, a gathering of older Afro-American lesbian, gay men, bisexuals, two-spirit, and transgendered person, meets regularly at the Audre Lorde Project, 85 South Oxford Street, Brooklyn. For information call 718-596-0342 ext. 20.

Continued on page 7

GMAD Announcements Continued from page 3

by **April 13**, with the balance due by May 11. Checks should be made payable to U Men Entertainment and can be mailed or hand delivered to the GMAD office. For more information call the GMAD office, or James Saunders at 718-346-3589.

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Community Announcements Continued from page 6

A Group of Our Own, a place for Disabled Gays and Lesbians to come to share feelings, and discuss issues of concern, recently organized. The group has no political agenda and does not align with any political group/party. For more information about this "old-fashioned rap group," contact Dennis at 718-573-8193.

Master composer and pianist, **Hakeem Muhammad**, GMAD member and Dandy Black Brigade co-founder, announces the publication of **Inner Voices**, a collection of nineteen spontaneous improvisations on compact disc. The disc will be available for $15.00 (+ $2.00 shipping) after its release. For more information write: Hakeem Muhammad, P.O. Box 233, Williamsbridge Station, Bronx, New York 10467-0233.

The **Michael Callen-Audre Lourde Community Health Center** is conducting confidential interviews with men who have sex with men about your sexual behaviors and sexual beliefs. Participants will receive $40.00 for about 1.5 hours of time. Both patients and non-patients of the Center are welcome to participate. Help improve our community's health education resources to better serve our needs. Contact Chris White at 212-271-7200 x302 to schedule an interview.

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Back Space

Excerpt from Strange Fruit (Black Like Me)

by Victor Samuda

11-28-98

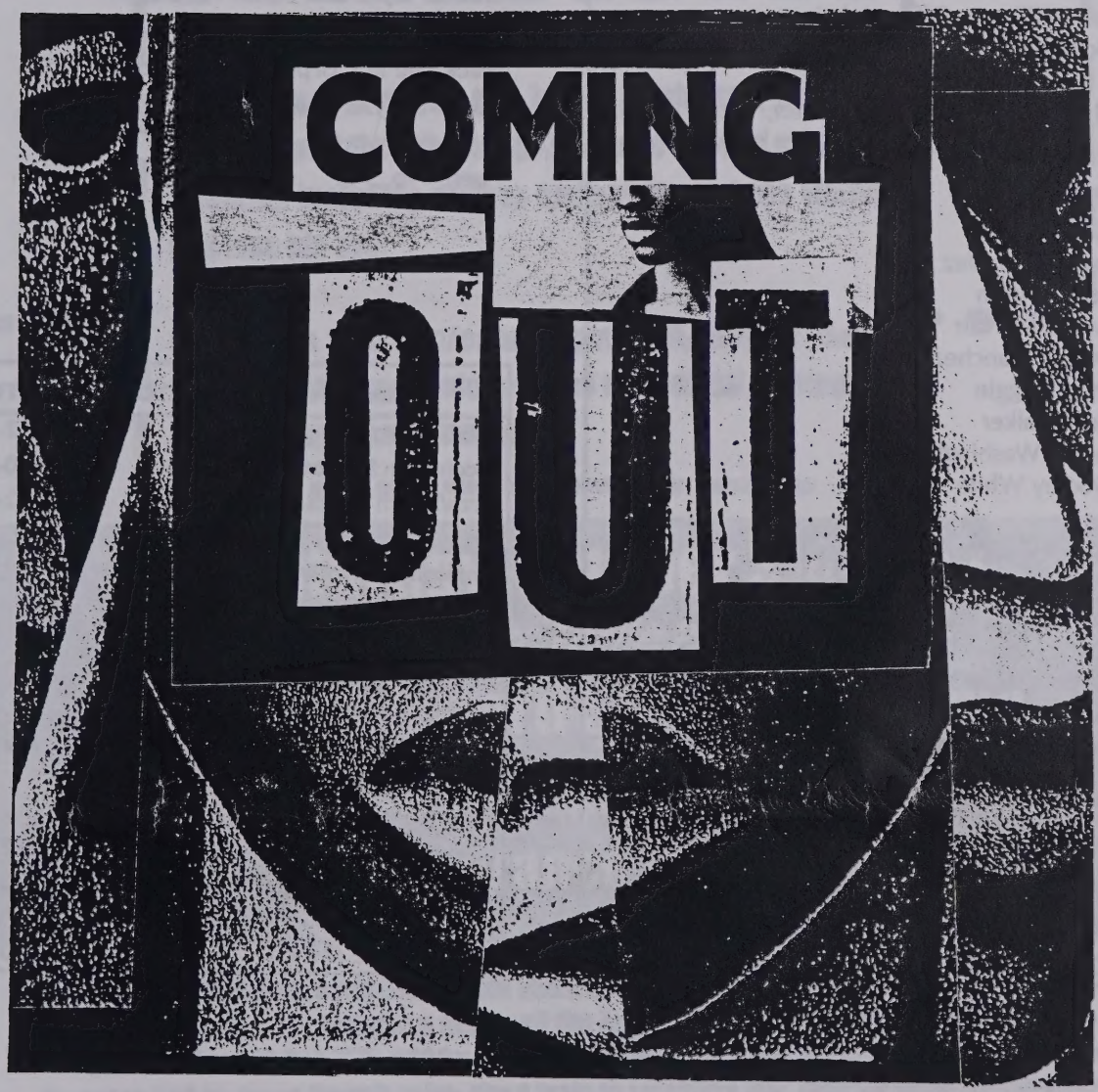
WITH A ROPE FOR A VINE AND BLOOD FOR JUICE
T'IS NOT A FRUIT YOU WOULD EVER WANT TO EAT
NO...THIS FRUIT'S GOT BULGING EYES, WHICH NO LONGER SEES
EYES PROTRUDING FROM THEIR SOCKETS
BECAUSE THE ROPE AROUND IT'S NECK HAD NO CLEMENCY
T'WAS A STRANGE FRUIT TO SEE
T'WAS A STRANGE FRUIT INDEED
T'WAS BIG, BLACK, RIPE AND GLISTENING
HANGING FROM A TREE
T'WAS BLACK LIKE ME

GMAD Newsletter

October 1998

VOLUME 12, NUMBER 3

Gay Men of African Descent



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GMAD Fax.....(212) 414-9351
GMAD E-Mail..... GMAD@AOL.COM
GMAD Website.....WWW.GMAD.ORG

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***Need Help?* - Contact Numbers**	
AIDS Hotline	212-447-8200
Alcoholism Services	800-368-1186
Birth/Death Certs	212-788-4500
Drug & Substance Abuse Services	212-399-8715
Employment Hotline	800-562-7692
Federal Info. Center	800-688-9889
Food Stamps Info	800-342-3009
Housing Legal Svr	212-431-7200
Internal Revenue Svr	800-829-1040
Lesbian & Gay Anti-Violence Project	212-807-0197
Motor Vehicles	212-645-5550
Parking Violation	212-477-4430
Suicide Prevention	212-577-7777
TALKSAFE (Free Mental Health Service)	212-279-0510
Voter's Information	212-VOTE-NYC
YOUTHLINE (24hrs)	800-246-4646

26 Violent Incidents in 28 Days

GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL & TRANSGENDER PEOPLE ARE UNDER ATTACK

In the past month, violent anti-gay attacks have been perpetrated in upper and lower Manhattan, Queens, Brooklyn and the Bronx. Victims have needed medical attention including stiches and splints and one victim will lose his eye.

Come to a teach-in/candlelight vigil/rally to learn more about these incidents and to demand a comprehensive community response.

On: Saturday, October 3 @ 6pm

Meet at the Audre Lorde Project (ALP):

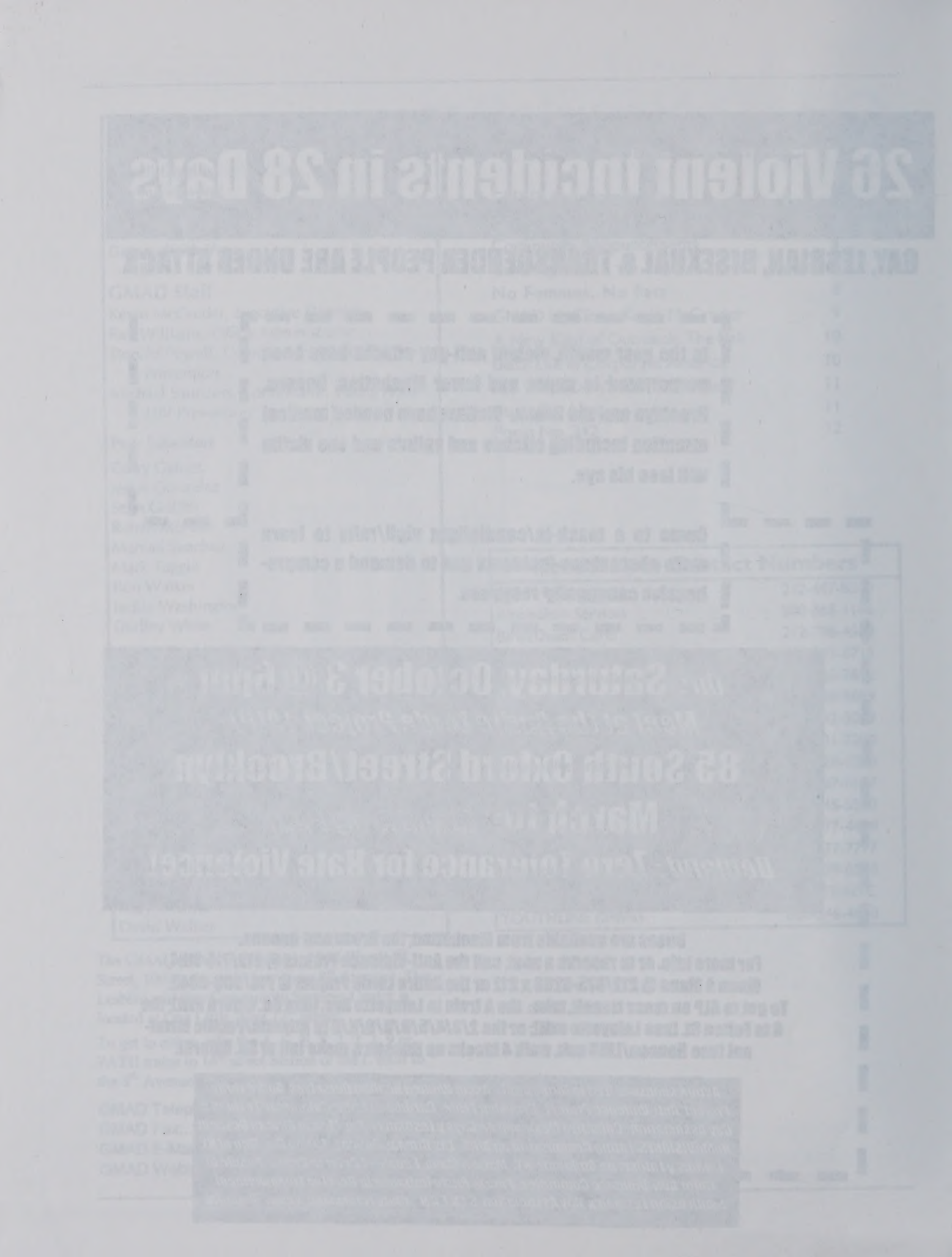
85 South Oxford Street/Brooklyn

March to: Grand Army Plaza

Demand: Zero Tolerance for Hate Violence!

Buses are available from Manhattan, the Bronx and Queens.
For more info. or to reserve a seat, call the Anti-Violence Project @ 212/714-1184, Mano à Mano @ 212/675-3288 x 212 or the Audre Lorde Project @ 718/596-0342.
To get to ALP on mass transit, take: the A train to Lafayette Ave. (use So. Oxford exit); the G to Fulton St. (use Lafayette exit); or the 2/3/4/5/B/D/Q/N/R to Atlantic/Pacific terminal (use Hanson/LIRR exit, walk 4 blocks up Hanson & make left of So. Oxford).

Action sponsors (list in formation): Asian Women Healing Ourselves, Audre Lorde Project, Anti-Violence Project, Brooklyn Pride, Caribbean Pride, Colombian Lesbian & Gay Association, Colectivo Mexicano de Gays y Lesbianas, Gay Men of African Descent, HoMoVISIONES, Latino Commission on AIDS, Las Buenas Amigas, Latino Gay Men of NY, Latinos y Latinas de Ambiente-NY, Mano a Mano, People of Color in Crisis, People of Color Anti-Violence Committee, Puerto Rican Initiative to Develop Empowerment, South Asian Lesbian & Gay Association, S.I.S.T.A.H., Unity Fellowship, Venus Magazine



GMAD Announcements

▲ The next meeting of **GMAD's Program and Planning Committee** meeting, at which Friday Forums for December, January and February will be arranged, is on Monday, November 2nd at 6:00 p.m. at the GMAD office.

The committee is pleased to announce the following upcoming events:

- **Saturday, October 17th - 6 P.M.**
  GMAD goes to a film viewing of *Beloved*, based on the novel by Toni Morrison.
  Contact the office the week of October 12th for theater location and exact showtime.

- **Sunday, October 18th - 8 P.M. - *Until***
  GMAD's 3rd "*Blue Lights in the Basement*" at Rockwell's
  With slow jams and classics, doing it like we used to...
  Singles: $10 / Couples: $16 / GMAD Members: $8
  31 Rockwell Place, Brooklyn, NY (between DeKalb Ave. and Fulton St.)

- **Saturday, November 14th - 1 P.M.**
  GMAD tours the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture
  515 Malcolm X Blvd. (aka Lenox Ave.)
  A free, guided tour of the exhibit ***Blacks on Stage*** covering Black entertainment history (Donations gladly accepted)
  Contact the office by November 12th if you wish to attend.

- **Friday, December 18th - 8 P.M.**
  GMAD attends an Alvin Ailey Dance Theater performance at City Center
  Group tickets may be purchased for **$21.00**.
  Purchase your tickets at the GMAD office by October 26th.

▲ **GMAD** will hold its 1998 **Charles Angel Awards** on the evening of Saturday, December 5th (location will be announced soon). Six individuals who have contributed to the community of gay men of African descent will be presented with Angel Awards named after GMAD's founder.

▲ **GMAD's Education Tuesday: Personal Finance**
Looking for tips on how to manage your money? Join us for the October Education Tuesdays series which will cover Credit Repair, Savings and Investment, and Homeownership Opportunities. Classes are on October 13th, 20th and 27th from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the GMAD office.
Call the office for the specific topic schedule.

▲ **GMAD's Project Millennium** is proud to announce the Information and Referral Helpline. The Helpline is available from 12:00 noon until 8:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Saturday. The telephone number is 1-888-325-GMAD (4263) and is toll free.

▲ **"Ask Mr. G"** Do you have questions about relationships, health, spirituality, coming out and mental or physical abuse? Ask Mr. G! Responses to your questions will be provided by a professional with twenty years experience with individuals and groups. Send your letters to:

"Ask Mr. G" - GMAD
248 West 14 St., 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10011

Garry Gaines of the GMAD staff will be appearing in a production of "The Colored Museum" at the Riant Theatre, September 17th - October 11th.
The play runs Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday at 8PM - Tickets are $15
The Riant Theatre is at 161 Hudson St, 4th Floor (212) 925-8353

(Continued on page 10)

GMAD Forums
October 1998

FRIDAY NIGHT FORUMS
(Held 8 PM at the Gay & Lesbian Community Center at One Little West 12th St. unless otherwise stated.)

▲ **October 2nd - Immigration**
What are the major immigration issues for lesbian, gays, bisexuals and transgender people of African descent? How do these issues differ from those faced by heterosexuals of African descent? What assistance (advocacy, services, etc.) can we provide to those who need it?
Facilitators: Derwin Keith Vega, Kevin McGruder

▲ **October 9th - Volunteer Recognition Night**
Volunteers are essential to GMAD. Tonight we recognize those who have volunteered for GMAD during this year. If that includes you, call the GMAD office so that we can be sure to recognize you.
Facilitators: Kevin McGruder

▲ **October 16th - Black Gay Issues and the lack of Media Coverage**
A summary of the Black Caucus' State of Emergency Town Meeting and a report from GMAD's Public Education Committee. Come prepared to discuss the advocacy issues that are important to you and that GMAD should address.
Facilitator: Members of the Public Education Committee

▲ **October 23rd - City Councilman Phil Reed**
Phil Reed, New York City Councilman (E. Harlem, the South Bronx and the Upper West Side) and a Black, gay man will share his perspectives on his first 10 months in office.
Facilitator: Ralph Wilson

▲ **October 30th - Game Night** (at the GMAD office)
Join us for a relaxed evening of Bid Whist, Scrabble, Jeopardy, etc. along with refreshments, music and good conversation.

OVER 50 FORUM
(Held 3 PM at the GMAD Office)

The Over 50 Forum meets on the second and fourth Sundays of each month (October 11th and 25th).

YO! GMAD FORUMS
(Held 6 PM at the GMAD Office)

▲ **October 3rd - Promiscuity**
Does having more than one sexual partner make us fast and easy?

▲ **October 10th - YO! GMAD Reunion**
Meet members of the original group and talk about how things were then, how they are now and how they could be in the future.

▲ **October 17th - YO! GMAD Enjoys The Movies**
Enjoy an evening of movies and popcorn with YO! GMAD (Eve's Bayou, Money Talks).

▲ **October 24th - Relationships Part 1**
Defining personal relationships. How do we develop relationships with ourselves?

▲ **October 31st: Relationships Part 2**
How do we begin to develop meaningful, personal relationships with other people?

BETWEEN THE COVERS

This month the GMAD book club will meet on Sunday, October 25th at 5:00 p.m. Call the office for this month's selection and meeting location.

- **Unity Fellowship Church** under the pastorship of Rev. Zachary Jones, holds weekly Sunday services at St. Mary's Church on Classon Ave. at Willoughby Street, Brooklyn at 3:30 p.m. For further information, call the church office at (718) 636-5646.

- The Men's Fellowship Committee of Unity Fellowship Church New York presents its first Men's Fellowship Retreat. It will be held the weekend of October 30th through November 1st at the Frost Valley Conference Center in Claryville, New York. Weekend activities include healing and intimacy workshops, Morning Prayer Saturday and Sunday, fellowship opportunities, and a pajama party Saturday night. Other activities provided by the conference center include boating, hiking, archery, etc. The total cost of the weekend, which includes accommodations, meals & transportation, is $135.00 per person, Registration is open to any male who wishes to build bridges, make connections and promote unity. However space is limited. Please register early. Your registration fee of $50.00 guarantees your space. For more information, please contact the Men's Fellowship Committee at (212) 636-5646.

- **Oasis of Love Family Worship Church:** Kenton Rogers, Senior Pastor and Vanessa Brown, Assistant Pastor, 112 West 131 Street (between Lenox and 7th Avenue), New York, New York 10027. In the Village of Harlem. Call for Church Schedule at 212-926-7669. Services are an open and affirms a spiritual family concept.

- **James Livingston,** GMAD's previous annual Fashion Show coordinator/designer, of Design Studio's is hosting a gala event/fashion show, on Sunday, October 11th, 1998, during Sunday Brunch at Chelsea' Lobster Company, located at 156 Seventh Avenue (between 19th & 20th Streets), from 12:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. Admission is the cost of your Brunch selection.

- **GrapevinePress** call for submissions: *"No Guest List"* a collection of Photography, Art and Writings about Black Gay Club-Dancing (with a positive message). Deadline for submission is November 15, 1998. For additional information you can call or write, Qevin Oji, Editor at (323) 296-8911 or send submissions to GrapeVine, P.O. Box 56057, Los Angeles, CA 90056-0057.

- **What Politicians Need To Hear:** "Telling Your Story in the Fight Against AIDS" is the theme of New York CAN!s HIV/AIDS Advocacy Skills Building Conference, Saturday & Sunday October 3-4, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., at GMHC. The conference covers the nuts and bolts of being a community advocate - how a bill becomes a law, how to lobby a legislator, giving public testimony, media savvy - and current political issues. This year it pays special attention to the impact that speaking from personal experience can have on elected officials. We want your group to attend! For information on how to send members, clients, volunteers or staff at no cost. Contact Andy Stern, 212-267-1231. Or, to simply receive a copy of the conference brochure, call Jacqualine Coleman, 212-367-1231.

- **Steal This Radio:** William Jones of Oakland, CA announces that tapes of his radio show focusing on Pan African gay men's liberation will be rebroadcast on *Steal This Radio* at 88.7 FM on Fridays from 7 to 8 p.m.

- **The Audre Lorde Project (ALP):** ALP is a center is for lesbian, gay, bisexual, two-spirited and transgender people of color communities based in Brooklyn. Groups on site include a gay men of color rap/discussion group; a lesbian, bisexual rap/discussion group; and a Friday drop-in group for persons under 24 years of age. For more information or to get on the mailing list, call (718) 596-0342

- **Black gay men who are HIV+** can attend a confidential support group every Monday from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Call PWAC at (212) 647-1415 for additional information.

- **G Mosaic:** A social/support group for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people of color meets every first and third Friday of each month at the Triangle Community Center, 25 Van Zant Street (1st Floor), Norwalk, Connecticut. For further information, contact G Mosaic coordinator Nasheed Abdul-Wakil at 203-854-7726 (leave a message).

- **ron k. brown/EVIDENCE dance group** can be seen at the Dance Theater Workshop located at 219 West 19th St. (212-924-0077). All shows listed are at 8 PM. Tickets are $15 / $10 Students, Seniors & DTW Members. Three programs are listed: *Incident* Oct. 22 - 25 / *Better Days* Oct. 29 - Nov. 1 / *Mixed Repertoire* Nov. 5 - 8

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October 1998

GMAD Planner

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
September S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30		November S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30		*1* 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM Sex & Sexuality	*2* 5:00 PM - 7:30 PM GMAD Happy Hour **8:00 PM GMAD Friday Night Forum** Forum Topic - Immigration	*3* 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM YO! GMAD: Discussion: Promiscurity
4	*5* 6:30 PM - 9:00 PM Movie Night	*6*	*7* 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM Ear Acupunture 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM HIV+ Support Group (Contact D. Powell for location!)	*8*	*9* 5:00 PM - 7:30 PM GMAD Happy Hour **8:00 PM GMAD Friday Night Forum** Forum Topic-Volunteer Recognition Night	*10* 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM YO! GMAD: 10th Reunion
11 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM **Over 50 Forum** **10th Annual National Coming Out Day**	*12* 6:30 PM - 9:00 PM Game Night	*13* 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM **ET** *Personal Finance - Part I*	*14* 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM Relapse & Recovery 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM HIV+ Support Group	*15* 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM Sex & Sexuality	*16* 5:00 PM - 7:30 PM GMAD Happy Hour **8:00 PM GMAD Friday Night Forum** Forum Topic-Black Gay Issues/the Media	*17* 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM YO! GMAD: Movies- Eve's Bayou & Money Talks GMAD attends a view of "Beloved"
18 **8:00 PM** **Blue Lights in the Basement** At Rockwell's *GMAD Members: $8* *Singles: $10* *Couples: $16*	*19* 6:30 PM - 9:00 PM Movie Night	*20* 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM **ET** *Personal Finance - Part II*	*21* 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM HIV+ Support Group Project Millenium: YA Open Rap Group	*22*	*23* 5:00 PM - 7:30 PM GMAD Happy Hour **8:00 PM GMAD Friday Night Forum** Forum Topic-City Councilmtn Phil Reed	*24* 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM YO! GMAD: Discussion: Relationships Part 1
25 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM **Over 50 Forum** The GMAD Book Club meets at 5 PM - Call the office for details	*26* 6:30 PM - 9:00 PM Game Night	*27* 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM **ET** *Personal Finance - Part III*	*28* 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM Relapse & Recovery 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM HIV+ Support Group	*29*	*30* 5:00 PM - 7:30 PM GMAD Happy Hour **8:00 PM GMAD Friday Night Forum** Forum-Game Night at the office	*31* 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM YO! GMAD: Discussion: Relationships Part 2 Community Awareness Day at GMAD 2 to 5 pm

Come Out Wherever You Are

by Darrell Baldwin Diggins

On October 11th, gays, lesbians and bisexuals across the United States will take part in, if not celebrate, what many consider the single bravest act of their lives: coming out of the closet. October 11th, 1998 marks the tenth anniversary of National Coming Out Day (NCOD).

First celebrated in 1988, National Coming Out Day began as a commemoration of the historic 1987 March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights and the inaugural visit of the Names Project (the AIDS quilt) to the nation's capital, NCOD has since been encouraged as a day for those of us in the les/bi/gay/trans community to each take a step toward coming completely out of the closet and be open and honest about our sexuality with our families, our friends and our co-workers. NCOD offers us an opportunity to diminish the negative stereotypes of what it means to be a les/bi/gay/trans person. "It gives us a chance," says David Moody, an openly gay travel agent, "to make a difference not only in our own families, but to make it better for the younger sisters and brothers coming up behind us."

David, like many other out, Black, gay men I've spoken with, acknowledges that coming out is necessary and ultimately liberating, yet he is aware that coming out can be difficult, and occasionally imprudent, particularly for youth and those living in gay-hostile households. "Coming out is difficult because you have to keep doing it over and over again," says Max, a sophomore at Rutgers University. "I'm glad I did it though." Max, who has a best-friend relationship with his mother, came out to her after graduating from high school. "I knew that even if she didn't approve of my sexuality, she would still love me," he says. "It took a lot of talking and explaining at first. But she came around."

> "Ironically, for many of us, the hardest step in the coming out process is coming out to ourselves"

Max's process--of coming out first to a person who he is very close to--is a good first step. According to the "Resource Guide to Coming Out", a how-to and resource manual published by Human Rights Campaign, testing the waters, or telling someone who loves you unconditionally and isn't very judgmental is a good place to start. You can get a sense of how accepting your family and friends are by the things they say--or don't say--when the subject of homosexuality comes up. If your friends' and family's reactions are positive, chances are they'll be more accepting of you. Once you gain an ally, especially within a family, they are likely to advocate for you with other family members. Personally, my sister was influential on my behalf with my parents. She made it known with no uncertainty to our parents that shunning me was silly and would prove costly to our family in myriad ways. Ultimately, however, it seems the majority of parents end up doing the right thing, by embracing and supporting their les/bi/gay/trans children.

Linda Villarosa, former Executive Editor of Essence Magazine, says while it took time [to gain acceptance], her family finally let go of the fantasy person she was and came to accept the real Linda. "I was hurt and confused initially," Linda's mother, Clara Villarosa, told her. Because she didn't know how to deal with the situation, Linda's mother had no precedent. But once she became educated [about homosexuality] by Linda, she lost her fear of it. "Besides," Clara quipped jokingly, "knowing Linda, I didn't have much of a choice but to accept it."

Unfortunately, few of us can make our family and friends accept our sexual orientation. But we can--and should--make every effort to take every step we are capable of and be all of who we are. Yes, it is a long and sometimes arduous journey, but we must take the steps. Ironically, for many of us, the hardest step in the coming out process is coming out to ourselves - self-acceptance. In the past many of my friends (myself included) have internalized homophobia so effectively and virulently that we have become our own harshest critic. I recognize that we are taught this of course, but we must take responsibility for stopping it.

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"Coming out of the closet is not about telling everyone you come in contact with that you are les/bi/gay/trans."

There are a number of organizations that are available to assist us in deprogramming homophobia and making the transition from the closet. Among them locally are Gay Men of African Descent, Gay Men's Health Crisis, Audre Lorde Project and Unity Fellowship Church. These organizations offer a variety (individual and group) of options for emotional, social and spiritual support in the processes of self-acceptance and coming out.

Coming out of the closet is not about telling everyone you come in contact with that you are les/bi/gay/trans. Coming out of the closet means not being afraid of being "discovered" or being found out. It means no longer lying and hiding. No longer being on the "down-low."

Admittedly, coming out is never easy, but it gets easier. And thankfully, you don't have to do it alone anymore. So get help if you need it. If you're already out, help somebody else. Come October 11th, be brave and open a closet door! And celebrate!

P.S. For a more comprehensive list of "Coming Out" resources and organizations, please contact me in c/o GMAD , 248 W. 14th Street, NY, NY, 10011. ■

No Fats Femmes or Fakes:

A Meditation on Body Image in Male Same Gender Loving Culture - Part 1

By Steven G. Fullwood

> Straight acting 19 y.o. brutha looking for a brutha. The 411...6'3" and 175# track body. I am about the color of a Hershey candy bar (I will melt in your mouth not in your hands). I am looking for a brutha that is sexy_19-30 who's minimum height is 5'10" and about 160-230! Don't have to be perfect, but in some kind of shape. Much respect but no FAKES, FEMS, OR QUEENS! If you 'BOUT IT 'BOUT IT hit a brutha up! *(actual ad)*

We've all seen the ads. We might've even posted one. After going through gobs and gobs of them for the past two weeks, I think there's something sinister in what our choice in lovers reflect. Furthermore, there's an underlying truth many of us are loathe to face: our culture may be killing us. Or, at the very least, making it very difficult to love ourselves as we are.

My original intention was to illuminate how same gender loving men (formerly known as gays and homosexuals) see their bodies, and how one's culture and self-perception co-mingle in shaping our choices in choosing sexual partners.

But then I realized that I simply wanted to issue my own fears about growing older in a culture that doesn't value our elders. I also wanted to articulate my frustration at being moderately attractive in a culture that values largely agreed upon standards of beauty--many of which do not apply to me. What follows are my observations on navigating a terrain I lovingly call a "killing culture."

(Let me say this first off: I often feel, and I'm not sure about this, but I believe everyone is having a great time and I'm being left out of all the fun. It must be all those Sprite, Pepsi and Nike commercials.)

I'm skinny, and I will most likely always be skinny. That's just the way it is. Call it genetics, whatever. This is mine and I love it. But coming to love it was a long time coming. I used to hate my body.

Sometimes I like to dress it up and think of myself as slim or even muscular (I got these great arms!) but most of my life has been wrapped up in feeling bad about my skinny ass. Now, more than a few people have told me to shut my face, go with the flow, enjoy a good thing while it lasts.

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Thin is in! Well, I don't necessarily want to be "in." I want to live in a culture where there aren't any standards of beauty, where I can be happy without being afraid that my body type isn't "in." Why can't everybody be "in?"

It's cathartic to be able to tell the world that sometimes I don't feel good about myself. Most of the time I feel great, but that's due to looking in myself and realizing that whatever's going on inside determines how I feel inside. For a long time, I hurt. I struggled to see myself as beautiful, and still do, from time to time. It's not easy to root out all that negative stuff. But I work. Hard. Three cheers for my skinny-ass!

Everywhere we go, and everything we do is evaluated by the world we live in. This holds true in my community of brothers who are same gender loving people. When any one of us walks into a room filled with gay brothers (overt or covert), we are placed on several scales which measure and compound our sexual and financial worth; the quotient of which is determined by the eye and experience looking in. In other words, our value as potential romantic partners is solely based on what we look like and what we got.

It doesn't matter who you are, or what you do, one never escapes this evaluation. You can be an activist. I can head up an organization where brothers benefit from my leadership. I can even write books documenting our collective struggles to love each other, while working to gain the freedoms America often promises, but rarely delivers. But really though, what I want to know is: Am I cute enough?

Next Month: We Are Not What We Want: Further Notes on Body Image in Male Same Gender Loving Culture, Part II. ■

GMAD UpClose: Kevin McGruder, Executive Director of GMAD

By Steven Fullwood

SF: Your zodiac sign and age?
KM: Virgo and 41.
SF: Status?
KM: Seeing someone.
SF: Idea of perfect happiness?
KM: Plenty of good books to read, friends and family to talk to, and a partner to share everything with.
SF: Greatest fear?
KM: Drowning.
SF: With which historical figure do you most identify?
KM: Rudolph Fisher (1898-1934) Harlem Renaissance writer (novels: The Conjure Man Dies, The Walls of Jericho, short stories and essays), and physician. Fisher combined an Ivy League education and a Howard medical degree with a love of Black people in general and Harlem residents in particular, to become a witty chronicler of Harlem high life and low life in the 1920's. In 1992, I had the pleasure of interviewing his 99-year old widow, Jane Ryder Fisher, and it was like meeting an old friend.
SF: A trait you most deplore in yourself?
KM: A tendency to be judgmental.
SF: Greatest extravagance?
KM: Buying books.
SF: Do you believe in capital punishment?
KM: No. I don't believe that the state should have the right to take anyone's life, particularly when one's considers the flaws in our criminal justice system that result in Black men bearing the brunt of these inequities.
SF: For what cause would you die?
KM: Family and friends.
SF: Do you believe in monogamy?
KM: Yes.
SF: Greatest love of your life.
KM: Harlem.
SF: Have you ever said "I love you," and didn't mean it?
KM: No.
SF: Greatest regret?
KM: Being to scared too give my name and number to a guy who I had a great conversation with on a NJ Transit train in 1988.
SF: When and where were you the most happiest?
KM: In 1974, marching with a drum and bugle corps in Toledo, Ohio
SF: How do you relax?
KM: By reading.
SF: How often do you have sex?
KM: I would only share that kind of information with a very close friend.
SF: Do you believe in life after death?
KM: I believe there is something after death--perhaps the spirit continuing to "live."
SF: How would you like to be remembered?
KM: As someone who was committed to Black people, and tried to use his talents to make things better.
SF: Most important lesson life has taught you, thus far?
KM: Patience. ■

A New Kind of Outreach: The Ball

On September 9, 1998 GMAD's Young Adult program held a mini ball at the Clubhouse. The mini ball was a way to outreach GMAD's young adult program to the young adults in the ballroom community. The ball was a great success. Many legends came out to support the event including Carmen Xtravaganza, the legendary mother of the House of Xtravaganza. This is only one of the many great successes that the young adult program at GMAD has been granted. We hope to see future events happening with GMAD and our young adults.

Jessie Gonzalez
Young Adult Peer Educator
House Of Lang

Black Life In Corporate America

By Derryck Griffith

Authors George Davis and Glegg Watson gave the Faustian concept of a man selling his soul for false prosperity.

A novel twist in their 1982 landmark book "Black Life In Corporate America," when they discussed the exorbitant price that many African Americans pay to enter the white corporate world.

Only the strong and secure in soul and spirit manage to make work for them. Davis and Watson interviewed Black corporate maven Jack Docket about what internal changes are required to survive corporate life. "Most of them (African Americans) don't know and don't care much about Black culture or any other kind of culture," Docket said. "They just want to make that money. They talk that talk just like the white guys. They have no racial consciousness at all," [he continues].

This is the moral compromise to which Belafonte refers. Nothing is more valuable than your soul, your integrity, and your sense of self. Guard and protect those parts of yourself with all your might. No job or amount of money is worth staying in a situation where you are not respected or valued.

GMAD Announcements (Continued)

- **GMAD Community Awareness Day - Sunday October 31:**
  A day for GMAD members to invite family and friends to the office where they can learn about our services.

Community Announcements (Continued)

- **The Griot Circle:** A gathering of older Afro-American lesbian, gay men, bisexual, two-spirited, and transgender persons meets regularly at the Audre Lorde Project, 85 So. Oxford Street, Brooklyn. For information call (718) 596-0342, ext. 20.
- **Other Countries: Black Gay Expression:** Holds a weekly workshop for Black gay writers every Saturday, 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center. All interested persons are encouraged to attend. For additional information call (718) 569-0342.
- **People of Color in Crisis (POCC):** Seeking men willing to serve as buddies for people with AIDS. They would also like to put you in touch with people with AIDS who are in need of a buddy or other POCC services. Call (718) 230-0770.
- **The Dandy Black Brigade:** A collective of Black gay musicians, holds its regular meeting on the second Saturday of each month from 2:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. at the Audre Lorde Project, 85 So. Oxford Street, Brooklyn. All persons with an interest in music are welcome. Call (718) 919-5595.
- **A Group of Our Own:** Place for Disabled Gays and Lesbians to share and discuss their issues of concern. The group has no political agenda and does not align with any political group/party. For more information about this "old-fashioned rap group," contact Dennis at (718) 573-8193.

For What Do We Stand As Men?

by John-Martin Green

At a recent Friday night forum on "Changing Trends in the Gay Civil Rights Movement: Resetting the Agenda," we talked of our community of same gender loving black men and women having a stake in our political future. It was, for the most part, a lively discussion in which several people, both on the panel and in the audience, called upon the group to take up our common cause and otherwise stand up and be counted. Thrilling, but then I wondered, what does talk of political involvement and activism mean to people, many of whom are still battling internally for the rights to exist as people at all?

The awful truth of the matter is that most of us are still disentangling ourselves from the internalized white racist visions of ourselves which have given us to believe that we are less than men. As if that weren't enough to keep us voiceless, we are also still working through the internalized homophobia which would have us believe that we are less than men and thereby, less than citizens. But political activism requires enough sense of self-worth that one can feel entitled to the rights and privileges of citizenship.

I would like to propose that GMAD host a series of forums and small workshops designed to facilitate members in identifying the areas of internalized racism and homophobia in our lives and strategizing mechanisms for the elimination of those handicaps.

Just as back in the sixties we looked beyond white visions of ourselves as niggers, savages, boys, and the like, so again is it time for us to expand our consciousness, conceptions and expectations of ourselves beyond the constructs which whites and heterosexuals have given us. We need to seize the splendid opportunity that GMAD affords us to do this work.

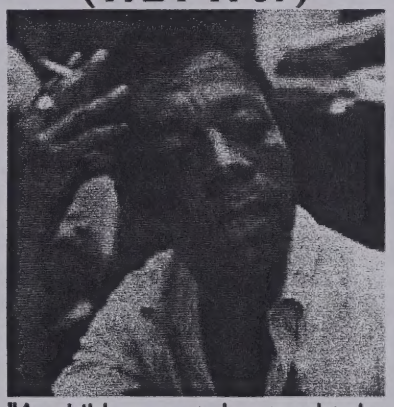
What do we mean when we say that we are "gay?" What do we mean about ourselves as social beings, political beings, cultural beings? Are there differences between us and heterosexual Black men? Might not there even be differences between us and gay white men? I believe there are. Among the differences are our ways of expressing our experience in language with idiomatic terms like, "One of the children," "Miss Thing [Thang]," "Banjee boy," "Girlfriend," and "Boyfriend," as well as our humor, movement and countless other indexes of cultural and other differences between ourselves and our families. I am seized with the notion that it is our responsibility to ourselves as men that we identify for ourselves those differences, those things which are unique to us a men of African descent who love men.

Defining for ourselves who we are and how we will be known and treated is some of the most important work we can do together as an organization. It is our job to define for ourselves what manhood means for us. Yes, it means something different for each of us but, what are those things we share as African American men who love men? Through recognizing, embracing and celebrating those areas of our collective identity we will begin to empower ourselves as individuals within our community and in the world. ■

Black Gay History

This is the first of a series of articles featuring the individuals found on the GMAD posters carried in the African Day American Parade

James "Jimmy" Baldwin
(1924-1987)



"A child cannot be taught by someone who despises him."

As the new school year begins and our nephews, nieces, cousin, and even our children return back to school this year, we must keep in mind, those exact words of Mr. Baldwin. We must also continue to take an active roll in the education of not only our youth, but ourselves.

Suggested reading of Mr. Baldwin are as follows: The Price of the Ticket, Giovanni's Room and Evidence of Things Not Seen.

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Poem No. 342

As we approach the year 2000, we are also exploring new modes of communications. One source of communications and social contact is the Internet. Brother Anthony L. Batiste, Senior Editor of the Nubian Webspot has created an outlet for SGL (Same Loving Gender Black Men) to communicate and network. Aside from the negative image of Internet activities, occasionally some good comes out of it. Quai and Gymiek (chat line handles) have been "chatting" for two months, and one day when the chat room became idle, they both decided to create a prose/poem in celebration of self-acceptance, unity and pride in race. Here printed for the first time is, ***"Poetry Among Intimate Strangers."***

poetry among intimate strangers
(for all of our Nubian Webspot
Chat room buddies)

do you want to see the future?
then
move to your present,
in order to remain at peace

see
after all
my past is full
& to
unload it
into an abyss of mystery
is still yet new to me

yet
nothin' new grows
unless
it's nurtured ...
nurtured with plenty of love &
care
the process of this desire,
shall
always start from within

see
the french have an expression:
"d' être bien dans sa peau"
in other words,
"to be at ease inside one's skin."

well havin' learned from the
elders of my past . . .
my present shall no longer be a
burden . . .
a burden unto me,
for I have removed the shackles
of slavery' past
& in my present state
I shall lift up my head
to the future
& toward a new day of promises
fresh & so richly fulfilling . . .

for now my past . . .
my present
& most certainly my future
knows
only peace & rest unlike before.

Published Work 1998
Copyright Quai
(a.k.a. damone m. burchette)
& Chet/Gymiek
(a.k.a. d v brooks)
All Rights Reserved ■

JAMES BALDWIN, (1924-87)

A novelist, essayist, and playwright, James Baldwin wrote with eloquence and passion on the subject of race in America. His main message was that blacks deserve to be treated like humans and that the civil rights problem derives from the insecurity of the white man, who needs a "Negro" to whom he can feel superior.

James Arthur Baldwin was born on Aug. 2, 1924, in the Harlem. His father, a Sunday minister, was very strict with his nine children, of whom James was the oldest. Teachers remembered James as a slight, intelligent, sad-looking boy. After graduating from high school in 1942, he worked at various jobs. A literary fellowship in 1948 enabled him to go to Europe, where he lived mostly in France. "Go Tell It on the Mountain" (1953), an autobiographical novel, helped establish him as a writer.

After his return to the United States in 1957, Baldwin became deeply involved in the civil rights movement. `Nobody Knows My Name' (1961), a collection of essays, brought him awards. His play `Blues for Mister Charlie' was produced on Broadway in 1964.

Baldwin also wrote the essay collections `Notes of a Native Son' (1955) and `The Fire Next Time' (1963); `Going to Meet the Man' (short stories, 1965); and the novels `Giovanni's Room' (1956), `Another Country' (1962), `Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone' (1968), `If Beale Street Could Talk' (1974), and `Just Above My Head' (1979). He died in St-Paul de Vence, France, on Nov. 30, 1987.

(Reprinted from the Black History Series) ■